

The Beauty of GOD



JOHN HOOD



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THE BEAUTY OF GOD

THE BEAUTY OF GOD

AS REVEALED IN HIS WORKS, HIS WRIT-
TEN WORD, AND THE LIVING WORD
THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF
LIFE AND LIGHT AND
LOVE

BY

JOHN HOOD, A. M., M. D.

SURELY, SURELY THERE IS SOMEWHERE AN IDEAL
HOLY ONE WHOM I CAN TRUST UTTERLY. OH, THAT
I MIGHT IF BUT FOR A MOMENT BEHOLD HIS PER-
FECT BEAUTY.

—CHARLES KINGSLEY.



J. LANAHAN
BALTIMORE
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To

ALL WHO, THROUGH MORE ABUNDANT LIFE,
BRIGHTER INNER LIGHT, AND MORE ARDENT LOVE,
ARE STRIVING TO ATTAIN A CLEARER VISION
OF THE BEAUTY OF GOD

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PROLOGUE

Thine, O Jehovah, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty.

—1 Chronicles 19:11.

The infinite perfections of God so harmonize as to constitute in His Person and Character an unending state of infinitely perfect Beauty.

The Word reveals the Divine Essence. His incarnation makes that Life, that Love, that Light which are eternally resident in God obvious to souls that steadily contemplate Himself. These terms, Life, Love, Light,—so abstract, so simple, so suggestive—meet in God; but they meet also in Jesus Christ. They do not only make Him a centre of philosophy; they belong to the mystic language of faith more truly than to the abstract terminology of speculative thought. They draw hearts to Jesus; they invest Him with a higher than any intellectual beauty.

—H. P. Liddon.

PROLOGUE

The trend of scholarship in our day is looking toward the unseen world, out of which comes the world of the senses. The transformation of the invisible into the visible is so ethereal that the learned in all countries and in all ages have been divided in their views concerning the real and substantial; some holding that the immaterial alone is real, and others that only the material is substantial. The weight of authority oscillates between these extreme views. After swinging more than a generation toward the things that are seen, the pendulum of scientific thought is now moving toward those that are not seen.

"What, after a little patient thinking," says J. Bryerly, "becomes clear up to the point of certainty, is that everywhere the seen is the offspring of the unseen, that the visible is, so to say, a secretion or deposit of the invisible, that matter is the handmaid and plaything of thought; that in a word the one primordial and universal reality is spirit. What after all is the whole material universe but a mass of petrified thoughts!

"The mere fact that we can give any rational account of the world argues, when we think the matter out, a Reason immanent in it which answers to our own. Every piece of its matter, related as it is to time and space, to cause and effect, to similarity and dissimilarity, to genera

and species, to statics and dynamics, to chemical, biological, and infinite other affinities, is by these very facts seen to be penetrated through and through with logic, with reason, with will, in a word, with spirit. It is not poetry, nor sentiment, nor the religious instinct only which declares the material world to be the vesture of an Eternal Mind. The dry necessities of logic leave no other conclusion open.

“Science and philosophy, in their latest forms, are asking whether cosmic force, in the final analysis, is not as clear an expression of will as is spiritual love. A coherent view of the universe demands conscious Spirit as much behind gravitation as behind affection. Natural laws are beginning to be realized as God’s habits in that sphere. Their performance means the permanence of His character.”

The things that are made and the laws that control them, when correctly interpreted, reveal one sovereign Power, one unerring Mind, one directing Will, in One Supreme Being of inexhaustible resources and infinite wisdom. “It is more and more clearly seen,” says President Gilman, “that the interpretation of the laws by which the universe is governed, extending from the invisible rays of the celestial world to the most minute manifestations of organic life, reveals one plan, one purpose, one supreme sovereignty—far transcending the highest conceptions to which the human mind can attain respecting this Sovereign and Infinite Power.”

Through scientific investigation Nature has been subjected to the most rigid and delicate tests that time and skill have invented. In the final analysis of inorganic matter "The Chemist," President Remsen says, "comes face to face with facts which lead to the belief that the smallest particles yet discovered are immense as compared with those of which he has good reason to believe the various kinds of matter to be made up."

In the ultimate analysis of organized matter the Biologist comes face to face with facts even more astounding than those which the Chemist finds. Professor Wilson, of Columbia University, in his work, "The Cell and Heredity," affirms that the more the cell is studied the farther removed it appears from the inorganic world. The cell is composed of matter and energy *plus* a something that cannot be tested by the methods applicable to matter and energy. This intangible something—this life-property, or organizing power, without which the cell would be nothing but dead matter, cannot be regarded as a product of the matter composing the cell, inasmuch as the matter of the cells or germs is identical for organisms which are vastly different in their final structure. For example, the germ cells of a polyp and of a fish are substantially alike and may grow side by side in the same drop of water, the one becoming a simple polyp and the other attaining the complex form of a fish. From this it is evident that neither the mere substance of the cells nor anything in the environment can account for

the life-property or organizing power which is manifested by their difference in development.

Of this organizing power of the germ Professor Brooks, of the Johns Hopkins University, says: "While we know nothing of its origin there seem to be insuperable objections to the view that the organizing power is either matter or energy. If it is physical energy, or wave motion, or perigenesis of plastidules, it is hard to understand why it has not all been dissipated long ago, or how it can be multiplied."

Thus the master Chemist and two master Biologists concur with the master Physicist, Lord Kelvin, when he says that "we have before us an unknown object in science."

Besides this "unknown object" there are other facts that the light of science fails to illuminate. Frederick Harrison asserts that science can never explain man as a loving, social, moral and religious being. "This side of man's nature," he says, "the greatest side of his nature, the largest, most dominant and most sublime fact in all nature, can only be explained by social science, solid philosophy, true religion. The central and vivifying life-blood of this social science, of this philosophy, of this religion for completing the development of humanity, is not evolution, but faith, hope and love."

Returning to the "unknown object before us in science," we see that in "consideration of both the inorganic and organic worlds we are left to the logical conclusion that visible things are mani-

festations of things that are invisible, of realities that manifest themselves, of powers in control."

"It is surely clear to all," says Dr. J. S. Christison, "that, owing to the imperfect state of science, it is in no position to dogmatize respecting the scheme of Nature, or even upon Nature's possibilities. Furthermore," he says, "it appears as a revelation of its own that in respect to the solution of any fundamental scheme of Nature science is utterly helpless and hopeless, inasmuch as the greatest of all her discoveries is the fact that science is doomed to labor forever, in the clouds of a universal paradox wherein the farther she proceeds the more remote seems the end." Edmund Burke saw this fact clearly and stated it plainly in simple language. "The great chain of causes," he says, "which links one to another, even to the throne of God Himself, can never be unraveled by any industry of ours. When we go but one step beyond the immediate sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth." One of the latest exponents of the evolutionary philosophy gives the following as the latest word of science: "All is quivering with energy. . . . Matter is indestructible, motion is continuous, and beneath both these fundamental truths lies the fundamental truth that force is persistent. All the myriad phenomena of the universe are manifestations of a single animating principle, that is both infinite and eternal."

Evidently science "by searching has not found God." Through the aid of philosophy she has

reached the conclusion that there is everywhere an infinite and eternal energy out of which all things forever proceed and on which all things forever depend. She cannot, however, determine whether this infinite energy is merely a blind force, or an intelligent and conscious Person. Here the Written Revelation of God comes to the aid of science and philosophy, and illuminates their final conclusion.

When we search through the visible world we find evidences of stupendous power, we see everywhere exquisite harmony and adaptation, and we discover inexhaustible resources. The researches of science in this vast realm of phenomena have brought to light three ultimate facts, to wit, unity of form, unity of substantial composition, and unity of power. These facts indicate the sway of one Sceptre over the seen and the unseen.

In the midst of this magnificent manifestation of power, and order, and beauty, at the head of the living world, stands man, endowed with personality, intellectuality, reason, and will; gifted with imagination, memory, and language; and dowered with faith, hope and love. These endowments could only have been developed in man by One Supreme Intelligence who possesses them in infinite perfection, and whose Sceptre controls and directs the laws, and forces, and materials of the universe. Has this Master Artist finished His works and left no word, spoken or written, concerning their origin and the character of their Architect and Builder? Has no articulate voice

but that of man ever been heard on this planet? Has earth's silence never been broken by a Divine voice? Has He who imparted the power of speech not spoken? Has no Written Word from Him come down to us through the cycles of time?

Finding ourselves living and working on the earth amid the splendid works of the Divine Artist, with innate desires to know the *ought*, the *whence*, and the *whither*, it is reasonable to believe, in view of the facts before us, that we would have the answers in articulate language to the questions that arise in our minds, concerning the origin and design of the universe, and of the sense of duty in our hearts.

We have in our possession a collection of ancient books and letters, composed by many authors, of various positions in life, from the king on the throne to the herdsman in the field and the fisherman in his boat. Their writing extended through a period of sixteen centuries. The writers portray an infinite and eternal Person, possessing infinite and eternal energy, dwelling in the High and Holy Court of the universe, the foundations of whose Throne are righteousness and judgment. This Divine Person is the Creator through whose will and ever-acting Power Nature exists. According to these Books He reveals Himself to men and angels in three great methods: (1) in His Works, (2) in articulate language, and (3) by Self-limitation in the Life and Cross of Jesus the Christ. These three are so blended that they constitute one great and

glorious system of Divine Revelation. To these might be added a fourth method, found in the life of the human family. "History," said Kosuth, "is the Revelation of Providence." God also gives His Good Spirit to the children of men to instruct them and to enlighten their hearts, so that every one who wills to be guided by the promptings of this inner Monitor may appropriate the saying of Socrates: "I am moved by a certain Divine and Spiritual influence."

With the first method alone science is concerned and beyond it the vision of the scientist cannot reach. In fact our correct ideas of the unseen and of the character of the Builder and Maker of all things have come to us, not from scientific researches, but from the Bible which contains "the thoughts of God in the language of men." These ideas are often used in the name of science, but to every one who thus uses them the words of Dryden forcibly appeal:

"Revealed religion first informed thy sight,
And reason saw not till faith sprung to light."

Faith, only faith is the evidence of things not seen. "Once know God otherwise than by discovery, once believe His Being upon the same foundation as you believe the existence of the world without your own personality, and the truth of self-evident propositions, all of which are incapable alike of proof and refutation; once apprehend Him as the Incomprehensible One in whom we live and move and have our being,

and then the world and all the worlds become the sublimest commentary and illustration of His transcending attributes, being, in truth, His uttered word still vibrating under the concave of immensity."

Now if we turn to the Written Word of God we may find something said therein of the unknown quantity that confronts us in science. Paul in his second epistle to the Corinthians says, "the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal." In the Book of Hebrews we are told that "the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." These words accord with the results of the most skillful scientific tests on atoms and germs, in which unseeable and unknowable particles and forces are at work back of all that the microscope can reveal. Upon this transmutation of the invisible into the visible light is reflected from the first words of the first chapter of Genesis. From careful study of these words we learn that in Eternity, not out of nothing but of Himself, God generated the immaterial substance out of which the universe was made. That substance was "without form and void," was unwrought and invisible, and therefore did not possess the properties of matter. "These primordial elements alone were created in the strict sense of the term, and Nature was developed out of these according to a fixed order of natural operation, under the supreme guidance of the

Divine administration," and thus Nature became endowed with a kind of selfhood of her own. The Spirit of God incubating, brooding over (*fovens et vivicans*) these invisible "waters," or unbounded fluids, generated the world. While this vivifying and developing work was progressing, God said "Let there be light and there was light"—light flashing out through the evolving universe, and in alliance with life giving form and tone to the newly generated worlds and all that is in them.

"Love is of God" and moved Him to create. Life and Light, like Love, are also of God and are eternally resident in Him. They, therefore, are no part of creation. They are unbegotten and eternal. In Life is power, under proper conditions, to produce infinite varieties of living beings. In the element Light, involving heat, electricity, and magnetism, is power to move, and warm, and illuminate the universe. In Love is power to draw us to God, and to our fellowmen, and to beget kindness and gentleness in our hearts toward the mute creatures below us.

In the study of the universe the final conclusion of science is, as we have seen, that all things have proceeded from an infinite and eternal energy. This unknowable energy is the unknown object that confronts us in science. Now let us, passing over all preceding and preparatory revelations recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, see what is the final word in regard to the character of God the Creator, by whom and "because of

whose will all things were, and were created." For this purpose we turn to the writings of their last author and in them we find written: "God is life; God is light; God is love." Here the pen of inspiration drops from the hand of the Beloved disciple to be taken up no more, for the climax of the Written Revelation has been reached. The "infinite and eternal energy" of science thus comes out in the Bible as "the Living God," "the Everlasting Father," having life in Himself, dwelling in eternal light, and working in infinite love. Life, Light, and Love, as is here clearly seen, stand apart from and above every thing created. They are elements in the Being of God the Creator, and reveal, through the things that are made, His character and glory; thus filling the world with joy, beauty and loveliness.

Living in the light of these truths we look into the face of James D. Dana, the master geologist, and repeat with him his own sublime words: "Believing that Nature exists through the Will and ever-acting power of the Divine Being; that all its great truths, its beauties, its harmonies are manifestations of His wisdom and power; that the whole universe is not only dependent on, but actually is, the Will of One Supreme Intelligence, Nature with man as its culminant species is no longer a mystery." The Beauty of the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of God breaks in everywhere.

B E A U T Y

He hath made everything beautiful in its time.
—Ecclesiastes 3:11.

How great is His beauty!
—Zechariah 9:17.

Beauty is multitude in unity.

—Old Roman Idea.

Thou art, O God, the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see;
Its glow by day, its smiles by night,
Are but reflections caught from Thee.
Where'er we turn Thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine.
—Moore.

How beautiful are all things when
we learn to prize them
Not for their sake but His Who grants
them or denies them.

Heat cannot be separated from fire, nor beauty
from the Eternal God.

—Dante.

I

BEAUTY

On a certain occasion where old age, mature life, and youth were represented the question, "Which season of life is most happy?" was freely discussed by the guests. The subject was finally referred to the host, upon whom rested the burden of four-score years. He inquired whether they had observed the grove in front of the mansion, and said: "When spring returns and in the warm air the buds are unfolding and the trees are covered with blossoms, I think, How beautiful is Spring! When Summer comes and covers the trees with foliage and singing birds hop from twig to twig, I think, How beautiful is Summer! When Autumn bends their branches with the weight of golden fruit and their leaves become tinted by the early frosts, I think, How beautiful is Autumn! And finally when Winter reigns and there is neither blossom, nor foliage, nor fruit, I look up through the bare branches as I never could until now, and I see the stars shining through them."

Each season has its own peculiar display of the beautiful and thus all through the year beauty reigns. "God has made every thing beautiful in its time."

The outer world in which we live and work is worthy, through its beauty alone, to be oc-

cupied—worthy to be studied, even by angels—worthy though marred through the disturbing touch of sin. “Its paths so full of melody, and fragrance, and beauty, are fitted to lead to heaven, and the starry vault which overhangs them is a suitable portico to God’s eternal Temple. Praised be God for the world of matter and all its accompaniments—for the air which not only fans the lungs and purifies the stream of life, but at our bidding wafts our most secret thoughts and feelings to our beloved fellow-minds; for the waters which not only fertilize and refresh the earth, but bind its continents and islands into one brotherhood; for the light whose vibrations enable us to touch the most distant planet, and whose rich beams overspread both earth and sky with charms.”

Lovely as is the outer world, its beauty does not compare with the exceeding beauty of the inner—the world of thought and emotion. “The beauty of material things is one; that of the mind is threefold—the beauty of the present, of the past, and of the future. The heavens and the earth are drawn within our imagination in those forms in which the soul has most delight. The past too is there according to the affinities of our minds. The future also is within. Hope—the busy artist of the mind—runs forward and paints the approaching scene in light. The beauties of nature are fixed; not so the beauties of the mind—they are changeable at will. The beauties of nature are attended with deformities. The mind can present us with thornless roses and un-

mingled fragrance. Milton's Eden blooms with beauties that can be combined only in the soul."

Not all within, however, is beautiful. "There are marks even in the soul, of dislocation and disorder; there are chasms and storms and deserts, often more awful than those of the external world; yet over the whole a grandeur like to that of archangel ruined, reigns."

In the outer world, more or less marred by sin, perfect beauty is rarely seen, and in the world of human thought and emotion, where sin has wrought so much havoc, complete beauty is probably never found. On the other hand complete ugliness is as rare, possibly, as perfect beauty. "Absolute ugliness," says Ruskin, "is admitted as rarely as perfect beauty; but degrees of it—more or less distinct are associated with whatever has the nature of death and sin, just as beauty is associated with whatever has the nature of virtue and life." "Nothing," affirms Balzac, "is irredeemably ugly but sin."

Of Keats' well known line, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," Ruskin says that "what joy remains for us and our children—in the fields, the home, and the churches, we must win by otherwise reading the fallacious line. A beautiful thing may exist but for a moment as a reality:—it exists for ever as a testimony. To the law and to the witness of it the nations must evermore appeal; and in very deed and very truth, a thing of beauty is a *law* for ever.

"That is the true meaning of classic art and of classic literature:—not the license of pleasure,

but the law of goodness; and if of the two words, beauty and goodness, one can be left unspoken, it is the first, not the last. It is written that the Creator of all things beheld them—not in that they were beautiful, but in that they were good.

“This law of beauty may, for aught we know, be fulfilling itself more fully as the years roll on; but at least it is one from which no jot shall pass. The beauty of Greece depended on the laws of Lycurgus; the beauty of Rome, on those of Numa; our own on the laws of Christ. On all the beautiful features of men and women, throughout the ages, are written the solemnities and majesty of the law they knew, with the charity and the meekness of their obedience; on all unbeautiful features are written either ignorance of the law, or the malice and insolence of the disobedience.”

Michael Angelo, when asked if the delicate finishing touches he was giving a fine piece of statuary were not trifles, replied, “Trifles make perfection, but perfection is no trifle.” Developing the thought of this epigram, we find that whatever, in its time and order, is perfect, in which all its parts and qualities, though they be trifles, are harmonious and complete, is beautiful. Beauty is thus seen to be a state or condition; in fact a form of harmony, and so Keats is speaking the language of science as well as of poetry, when he sings:

“O what a wild and harmonized tune
My spirit struck from all the beautiful.”

Beauty awakens in the soul of the beholder, through the senses, or through perception, a feeling of delight and admiration. This feeling is natural, for all beauty, so to speak, is an effluence from the beautiful in God, the Creator, in whose image and likeness man was fashioned. Some one has said that flowers, with which God has belted the earth, are expressions of the idea of the beautiful as it exists in the Divine Mind. Wilberforce says, "Lovely flowers are smiles of God's goodness." Linnaeus, after watching the opening of a beautiful flower, exclaimed, "I saw God as He passed by in His glory and I bowed my head in worship." "See," said Hafid, "yon bush aflame with roses like the burning bush on Horeb, the Mount of God. Listen, and thou shalt hear, if thy soul be not deaf, how from out it, soft and clear, speaks the Lord Almighty." "The Omnipotent," says Richter, "has sown His name on the heavens in glittering stars, but on the earth He planteth His name by tender flowers;" and Jacobi says, "As a countenance is made beautiful by the soul's shining through it, so the world is beautiful by the shining through it of God."

"A flower," said Oliver Wendell Holmes, "is an Amen flung from the mute lips of nature." In this poetic utterance is infolded a great truth. The mute life of nature, ever responsive to the Creator's word that is still vibrating through the universe in every atom and cell, is unceasingly throwing off Amens in her silent praise of Him who is of all things the Maker and the Beautifier.

When God manifests the beautiful in material forms and colors we behold physical beauty; when He reveals it through the activities of the mind we discern intellectual beauty; and when He causes it to shine out through the excellences of the spirit we are favored with a perception of spiritual beauty.

The lines of physical beauty are everywhere seen over earth, and sea, and sky. The stars move in lines of beauty; the mountains and the hills and the valleys are moulded in curves of beauty; while the "multitudinous seas" are covered with waves of beauty.

Emerson, in his keen and minute observation of phenomena, declares:

"Nature cannot be surprised in undress,
Beauty breaks in everywhere."

Tennyson affirms that "Nothing in Nature is unbeautiful," and Longfellow says, "Nature is a revelation of God," while Bancroft asserts that "Beauty itself is but the sensible image of the Infinite," and Milton calls it "God's handwriting."

In whatever direction our eyes are turned beauty greets us. If we look upward into the deep blue sky the glowing sun shines upon us by day, and in the stillness of the night "the innumerable stars singing in order, like a living hymn written in light,"

"Hang bright above us, silent,
As if they watched the sleeping earth."

If we look over the revolving earth we find it
girdled with

“Flowers so blue and pink and golden,
Stars that in earth’s firmament do shine,”

while in the limitless air the birds “in plumage
delicate and beautiful” wing their pathless course,
and the lovely forms of clouds,

“Bathed in the tenderest purple of distance,
Tinted and shadowed by pencils of light,
Loom up sublimely, aloft and afar.”

“Beauty,” writes Channing, “is an all-pervading presence. It unfolds to the numberless flowers of Spring; it waves in the branches of the trees and the green blades of grass; it haunts the depths of the earth and the sea, and gleams out in the hues of the shell and the precious stone. And not only these minute objects, but the ocean, the mountains, the clouds, the heavens, the stars, the rising and setting sun all overflow with beauty.”

“Nature,” says Whittier, “eschews regular lines; she does not shape her lines by a common model. Not one of Eve’s numerous progeny in all respects resembles her who first culled the flowers of Eden. To the infinite variety and picturesque inequality of nature we owe the great charm of her uncloying beauty.”

“Though nature is constantly beautiful,” says Ruskin, “she does not exhibit her highest powers of beauty constantly; for then they would satiate us and pall upon our senses. It is nec-

essary to their appreciation that they should be rarely shown. Her finest touches are things which must be watched for; her most perfect passages of beauty are most evanescent."

Three Divine attendants, figuratively speaking, in the High and Holy Court of the Universe, to wit, Life, and Light, and Love form the trio of Divine Artists that beautify the heavens and the earth. Life evolves the most complex and most lovely specimens of beauty; Light reveals and paints in varied hues the forms of the beautiful; and Love deftly retouches those forms with her softening highlights.

Nature is loved by what is best in us, and is so loved probably because there is something of the best of nature in man, and something of the best of man in nature. "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

"The rounded world is fair to see,
Nine times folded in mystery;
Though baffled seer cannot impart
The secret of its laboring heart
Throb thine with nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.
Spirit that lurks each form within,
Beckons to spirit of its kin."

"Beauty has so many charms," says Sterne, "one knows not how to speak against it; and when it happens that a graceful figure is the habitation of a virtuous soul, when the beauty of the face speaks out the modesty and humility of the mind, and the justness of the proportions raises our thoughts up to the heart and wisdom of the great Creator, something may be allowed

it, and something to the embellishments which set it off; yet when the whole apology is read, it will be found at last that beauty, like truth, never is so glorious as when it is the plainest."

"Beauty is the mark God sets on virtue."

"Beauty, like truth and justice, lives within us; like virtue and like moral law, it is a companion of the soul."

"Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not."

"The greatest truths are wronged if not linked with beauty; and they win their way most surely and deeply into the soul when arrayed in this their natural and fit attire."

"Beauty is an exquisite flower and its perfume is virtue."

"By cultivating the beautiful we scatter the seeds of heavenly flowers."

The mud in the streets of the city contains the materials out of which God makes diamonds and emeralds. He takes the muddy water out of the brook and, lifting it up into the dome of heaven, paints across the sky, through the falling drops of that cloudy water, a rainbow of matchless beauty. Who, that has looked upon the morning clouds illumined and tinted by the rising sun, has not been filled with wonder at the beauty which the Creator has spread over the sky? How lavish must He be in riches of goodness and beauty who can paint pictures so exquisitely lovely, then blot them out and go on painting others equally beautiful! "Nature, the

great missionary of the Most High," says Mrs. Child, "preaches to us forever in all tones of love, and writes truth in all colors and forms, on manuscripts illuminated with stars and flowers." Mrs. Browning sweetly sings:

"The essence of all beauty I call love;
The attribute, the evidence, and end,
The consummation to the inward sense
Of beauty apprehended from without,
I still call love."

An Indian philosopher, being asked what were, according to his opinion, the two most beautiful things in the universe, replied: "The starry heavens above our heads, and the feeling of duty in our hearts." This feeling of duty throbs in unison with the great Heart of the universe, for "beauty without virtue is like a flower without perfume." "The most natural beauty in the world is honesty and moral truth. All beauty is truth. True features make the beauty of the face, and true proportions the beauty of architecture, as true measure that of harmony and music." "How much more," says Shakspeare, "doth beauty beautiful seem by that sweet ornament which truth doth give."

Schiller informs us that in days of yore nothing was holy but the beautiful. "It is only through the morning gate of the beautiful," he also says, "that you can penetrate into the gate of knowledge. That which we feel here as beauty we shall one day know as truth." Through the vista of twenty-five centuries shines Sappho's lovely

epigram: "What is good is beautiful; who is good will soon be also beautiful."

"Beauty is only worthy of admiration," says Charles Kingsley, "when it is the outward sacrament of the beauty of the soul within. Nothing that man ever invents will absolve him from the universal necessity of being good as God is good, righteous as God is righteous, and holy as God is holy.

"The old Hebrew Scriptures teach that physical beauty is the deepest of all spiritual symbols, and though beauty without discretion be the jewel of gold in the swine's snout, yet the jewel of gold it is still, the sacrament of an inward beauty, which ought to be and perhaps hereafter may be, fulfilled in spirit and in truth.

"Form and color are but vehicles for the meaning of spiritual beauty.

"All melody and harmony upon earth, whether in the song of birds, the whisper of the wind, the concourse of voices, or the sounds of those cunning instruments, which man has learnt to create, because he is made in the image of Christ, the Word of God, who creates all things; all music upon earth is beautiful in so far as it is the pattern and type of the everlasting music which is in heaven, which was before all worlds and shall be after them."

In the world of the "infinitely little" the microscope has opened to our view a vast realm of astonishing beauty. "Microscopic currents, similar to those of the hairs of the nettle, have been observed in a great variety of plants," says Pro-

fessor Huxley, "and weighty authorities have suggested that they probably occur, in more or less perfection in all young vegetable cells. If such be the case, the wonderful noonday silence of a tropical forest is, after all, due only to the dullness of our hearing; and could our ears catch the murmur of these tiny maelstroms as they whirl in the innumerable myriads of *living* cells which constitute each tree, we should be stunned as with the roar of a great city." And could our eyes behold these tiny, whirling maelstroms of *living* fluids as they circulate through the *living* cells of the trees of the forest, we should be charmed with their beauty.

Now if the trees, and the flowers, and the skies, which are mere shadowgraphs of the beauty in which God dwells, are so beautifully arrayed, how exceedingly beautiful must be their Creator who conceives them, and fashions them, and clothes them in beauty!

There is no attribute of God that is not exquisitely beautiful and awfully sublime. There is no object beautiful and sublime but as it resembles God. When we have a correct apprehension of the Almighty One the universe becomes a Bethel and every truth we learn a round in Jacob's ladder. When the mind approaches the thought of Jehovah in His beauty it attains its highest elevation, and pours forth its richest songs. In the hymn before sunrise in the vale of Chamouny, how the mind of Coleridge as he rises to the thought of the Creator, becomes invigorated for his song!

“Entranced in prayer,
I worship the Invisible alone.”

His inspiration increases as he advances till he exclaims:

“Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain’s brow
Adown enormous ravines sloap amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bad the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-planes echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow streams with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Thou too, hoar mount, with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth!
Thou kingly spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great Hierarch! Tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.”

The forms of beauty that haunt the earth, and the sea, and the sky are but the ends of the threads of the warp and woof of the Creator’s inherent, eternal beauty. “Supreme beauty resides in God,” and all earthly beauty is but “the fringe of the garment of God.” “All earthly beauty, all nature, all art, all poetry, all music are but phantoms and parables, hints and hopes, dim reflected rays of the clear light of the Supreme Beauty.” The infinite perfections of God

constitute an unending state of infinite Beauty in His Person and character.

"What delights us in visible beauty is the invisible." Thoughts and emotions and ideals, find expression in forms and movements and colors. Through the things that we see are revealed the unseen laws and forces that move and control all material things. Through and around and above all created beauty, visible and invisible, move the eternal beautifiers, Life, Light, and Love, ever directing us upward to the High and Holy One who dwells in "eternal Beauty, unbegotten and imperishable."

"O if so much beauty doth reveal
Itself in every vein of life and nature,
How beautiful must be the source Itself,
The ever Bright One."

"God cometh from Teman,
And the Holy One from Mount Paran,
His glory covereth the heavens,
And the earth is full of His praise;
And His brightness is as the light."

But when we look through all the splendor of the universe up to its Source in the Word of God, "The Fountain of all loveliness," we bow our heads in silent wonder and adoration. "To attain the height and depth of His eternal ways all human thoughts come short." We can only exclaim like the prophet of old, "How great is His Beauty!" or worship with Charles Kingsley, who, when his last breath was passing and his eyes were opening on unseen beauties, faintly whispered, "*How beautiful God is.*"

“LIFE ETERNAL”

This is the record, that God hath given us
Eternal Life, and this Life is in His Son.

—1 John 5:11

Life is before you—not earthly life alone, but life—a thread running without end through the warp of eternity.

—J. G. Holland.

This is Eternal Life; a life of everlasting love, showing itself in everlasting good works; and whosoever lives this life, he lives the Life of God and has Eternal Life.

—Charles Kingsley.

The highest and dearest concerns of a temporal life are infinitely less valuable than those of an eternal life.

—South.

II

“LIFE ETERNAL”

Science rests upon the assumption that there are but two things, namely, matter and energy in the universe. Of the truth of this assumption one of its staunchest advocates expresses very decided doubt. “It seems to me,” says Professor Huxley, “pretty plain that there is a third thing in the universe, to wit, consciousness, which in the hardness of my head and heart, I cannot see to be matter or force, or any modification of either, however intimately the manifestations of the phenomena of consciousness may be connected with the phenomena known as matter and force.”

Life also is beginning to be considered by master scientists as something apart from and above matter and force. This view of the hoary question, “What is Life?” has been recently well stated by Sir Oliver Lodge. “Life may be something,” he says, “not only ultra-terrestrial, but even immaterial; something out-side our present categories of matter and energy; as real as they are, but different, and utilizing them for its own purpose. What is certain is that life possesses the power of vitalizing the complex material aggregates which exists on this planet, of utilizing their energies for a time to display itself amid terrestrial surroundings; and then it seems to

disappear or evaporate whence it came. It is perpetually arriving and perpetually disappearing. While it is here the animated material body moves about and strives after many objects, some worthy and some unworthy; it acquires thereby a certain individuality, a certain character. It realizes *itself*, moreover, becoming conscious of its own mental and spiritual existence, and it begins to explore the Mind which, like its own, it conceives must underlie the material fabric—half displayed, half concealed, by the environment, and intelligible only to a kindred spirit. Thus the scheme of law and order dimly dawns upon the nascent soul, and it begins to form clear conceptions of truth, goodness and beauty; it may achieve something of a permanent value, as a work of art, or of literature; it may enter the regions of emotion and may evolve ideas of the loftiest kind; it may degrade itself below the beasts, or it may soar till it is almost divine.

“Is it the material molecular aggregate that has of its own unaided latent power generated this individuality, acquired this character, felt these emotions, evolved these ideas? There are some who try to think it is. There are others who recognize in this extraordinary development a contact between this material frame of things and a universe higher, and other than anything known to our senses; a universe not dominated by Physics and Chemistry, but utilizing the interactions of matter for its own purposes; a universe where the human spirit is more at home

than it is among these temporary collocations of atoms; a universe capable of infinite development, of noble contemplation, and of lofty joy, long after this planet—nay the whole solar system—shall have fulfilled its sphere of destiny and retired cold and lifeless upon its endless way.”

Tennyson, in his address to a little flower growing out of a crevice in the crannied wall, recognizes the mystery of life and indicates its nature and Source:

“Flower in the crannied wall!
I pluck you out of the crannies,
Hold you here root and all in my hand,
Little flower; but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.”

Professor Tyndall, conscious of something more in the living world than his philosophy taught him, surmised that “there may be a vast unfathomable life,” flowing like ether through the whole realm of nature; so that

“From the high host of stars to the lulled lake and
mountain coast,
All is centered in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of Him who is of all Creator and Defence.”

Though life animates every cell in the structure of the body and meets the eye at every turn we make, we know not what life is; neither do we know what matter and force are, nor can we apprehend the nature of consciousness. We only know the qualities of matter and life and that

consciousness is something wherein the phenomena of matter and force and the activities of the mind and the heart are revealed. Whatever is thus revealed, under normal conditions, we accept as real, and worthy of consideration.

The phenomena of matter and life, and the influences of our beloved fellow-minds are manifested in consciousness and every moment we practically show our faith in their verity. Now if we accept the things of which science is cognizant as they are revealed in consciousness, are not those that are beyond the grasp of science and yet come within the conscious mind, to be equally accepted as true? Mind acts upon mind through the eye, through language and literature; and if it can act through these media, why not through others, or even by direct influence? And, further, may not God, the Eternal Spirit, manifest, not His essential Self, but His power, His grace, His love in the consciousness of man? To deny this power would be limiting the limitless One, and making the Eternal Father inferior to His dependent children.

Moreover, when the self-conscious mind once apprehends the idea of primary and continuous causes in a personal God, it recognizes infinite power and infinite wisdom above the forces of nature, and the loving Creator, in His works, becomes manifested in our consciousness. Once after watching the opening of a flower, Linnaeus said, "I saw God passing near me." The works of nature becoming in this way a revelation of God, there seems to be no reason why He may

not in human language make known His will and attributes to man, and bring them clearly within the circle of human experience. He who made language and gave the power of utterance, shall He not speak? If so, the things revealed in the Book we call The Word of God, when brought within the field of consciousness, ought to be accepted with as much confidence of their truth as are those of nature when thus apprehended.

Of life, which takes non-living materials and transforms them into living matter, we are joyously, and sometimes painfully, conscious. We know that we live, not because we can prove that we do, but because it is a matter of unbroken consciousness. Should a higher life come within the circle of our personal consciousness, we would also know from conscious experience that we were living this new life, and the evidence of it would be of the same kind as that of the reality of the natural life, or of any other fact that "experimental seal doth warrant."

The concession, therefore, of Professor Tyndall, who seems to have been blessed with an insight not born of his philosophy, was correct when he said, "Religious feeling is as much a verity as any other part of human consciousness and against it, on the subjective side, the waves of science beat in vain." Now, if "the subjective side" of human consciousness presents an impregnable rock "to the waves of science," then also does the objective side, for "consciousness, so far from revealing only our own existence,

and leaving us to gather all other existences by inference from this, cannot give us the percipient *self*, except in simultaneously giving the perceived *other than self*." Against the religious feeling, then, as a verity in consciousness, the waves of science, objectively as well as subjectively, beat in vain.

"Religion," says Matthew Arnold, "is morality touched by motion." This beautiful definition, framed doubtless after a careful analysis of the various *forms* of religion in the world, includes only the husk of religion. So far as religion is seen in the daily life of many of its votaries it might be as correctly defined immorality touched by emotion. The definition is theoretical and is the result of an observation of the external facts of religion. It leaves out the essential part, the hidden power, without which religion presents only empty forms, beautiful or grotesque, according to the taste of the devotee. The Christian religion, as revealed in the New Testament, and as possessed by the true disciple, is morality touched by emotion, and much more. It is morality touched with Life. Rather, it is Life itself producing pure morality and joyous emotion.

Life eternal, or Christian life, is not a renewed nor an elevated form of the life that is common to living organisms, including man, but a totally new life. Of men Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life." To the Jews He said, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Now these men had life. They were intensely alive to their national, moral, and relig-

ious affairs, yet Jesus talked to them as non-living men. He, the Eternal Word, had come among them, but they received Him not. To Him they were dead. Their selfish, sin-veiled hearts had no correspondence with the light of life that was in Him, nor with the love that had moved Him to come into the world. They loved darkness rather than light.

The life, therefore, which Jesus came into the world to give men is a new life, a spiritual life, a life to men of natural birth unknown. If asked what this higher life is, how or whence it comes, the questions may be answered by asking in reply, what is natural life? Whence does it come? Whither does it go? How does it evolve dead matter into living forms? "The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." There is a natural life, and there is a spiritual life, each being distinct, in kind, from the other. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Like everywhere produces like.

Men, "born of blood, and of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man," come not into the world of their own will. They are not consulted in regard to their birth into the world, but come into being without the power of assent or dissent, bearing the marks, good or bad, of their ancestors, inheriting thus defects and diseases, moral and physical, that may possibly entail life-long suffering. Not so is it in the re-

generation, or birth into the kingdom of heaven. In this new birth man's will is consulted. Men have the right to choose or refuse birth into eternal life. They have the privilege of receiving or rejecting the Prince of life. "But to as many as receive Him, to them gives He power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name." To those who accept Christ, God gives the power to enter by a new birth into a new life—a life in which there is no hereditary weakness, no defective environment, and consequently no tendency to death. They are still subject, while their earthly life continues, to the conditions of the old life, but while they abide in Christ and overcome the world, the new life deepens and enlarges and death will have no power over them in their exit from the earth.

The more deeply we look into life the deeper is our conviction that the life we are now living is not all of life. It is an unfinished symphony. A day may round out an insect's life, and a beast or a bird needs no tomorrow. Not so with him who is related to God by a new birth and feels "the power of an endless life."

Giving "power to become" is among men impossible. Man has power to take the materials furnished by nature and make them into whatever design he may choose, but he has no power to cause them to become either a thing of beauty or of utility. He can form marble into a statue, but he cannot cause it to become one. To give "power to become" is the prerogative of God. Great then is the privilege accorded to man, a

child of time and place, of becoming a child of eternity. Of necessity he comes into natural life without choice, but, as a compensation for this, he has a right to choose or reject birth into life eternal, and power to become a spiritual child of the Eternal Father, and co-heir with Christ Jesus of all things. Those, therefore, who reject the word of life and refuse to accept power to become the children of light, but choose rather to retain the power of remaining the children of this world, have no cause of complaint if their choice works out disastrously. Life eternal is offered to all on the same simple terms, namely, accepting Christ as the only Savior from sin and the only Prince of life.

Although man has power to become a scholar, a philosopher, or an artist he has no power naturally to become a Christian indeed, for this involves the power which belongs alone to God, of giving life to the dead.

After Adam's disobedience he hid himself—became dead to God. He lost the light of the higher life, lost his correspondence with his spiritual environment. From that sad hour to the present, most men have been dead while they live, "dead through trespasses and sins." Even when they would do good evil is present with them. They have no power to bring back the lost life nor to raise themselves into its exalted conditions. To give men power to regain the higher life, and enable them to live a life of righteousness, Jesus Christ came into the world. In Him is life. He who receives Him regains eternal

life and obtains power to walk in newness of life. He is lifted up, out of the pit of sin, his feet placed upon the Rock of Ages, and a new song put into his mouth, even praise to God. He is not henceforth bound down by the "law of sin and death," but lives upon the table land of purity and righteousness, and abides with Christ in "heavenly places." The pleasures of sin, in which he once reveled, have for him lost their charms. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death," so that he no longer walks after the flesh but after the spirit. This higher life controls the lower life, restraining the appetites and the passions and holding them within their legitimate sphere. The morbid outgrowths of the natural man are eliminated, and all the faculties of mind and heart work in harmony with the law of the Spirit of life. He loves truth, whether found in the works of God, in the history of man, or in the Written Word of God; for the Spirit of life that inspires his soul is the same Spirit that, brooding over the waters in the "beginning," brought form and beauty out of that which was "formless and void," and in the days of old moved the prophets in whom God spoke to the fathers in divers portions and in divers manners. He delights in all that God has made. Whether scanning the beauties of the landscape, or moved with awe where the mountain "majestic stands;" whether entranced in the midnight glory of the sky, or watching the mystic forces of nature, his heart leaps up when he hears in them the word

of the Creator which called them into being and still vibrates through every atom of the inanimate world and every cell of the living world. For him the Works of Nature form the complement to the Word of Revelation, in which he finds special joy and delight, because in this Word is revealed, not only, as in Nature, the power and wisdom of God, but also His holiness, His goodness, His mercy, His love. Every blessing that Nature, unperverted, can supply and every joy and comfort that the Bible offers may enter into the making of his life.

Though the higher life does not prevent those who are its happy possessors from making mistakes, it keeps them from committing sins. "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not" while he abides in Christ. Neither does it ward off the ills nor change the conditions of the earthly life, but enables us to endure them with submission and bear them with patience. We may often "be sorrowful yet always rejoicing." The storms may sweep over the sea of life and the billows may roll, but underneath them will continue the undisturbed flow of peace and blessedness.

Our natural life is ever in danger, from many sources, of being thrown out of "continuous adjustment" with its "external relations," and of being thus suddenly or gradually cut off in its course, but the life eternal, which is a life of love, cannot while we abide in God be affected injuriously by any created thing. "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor

height, nor depth, nor any other creation shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." While therefore, we abide in the Son we abide in Life.

Let us test in our faith and experience the word and the life of Christ Jesus our Lord. Let us permit Him to plant a germ of His life in our hearts and let us co-work with Him in nourishing its growth and development until soul and spirit become illumined with the light of His life. Then we shall prove for ourselves that there is life in Jesus Christ and that He is our life. The world is planting pieces of the hull instead of the germ in which the life dwells and is expecting to get spiritual germination and growth. But Eternal Life is not to be attained by merely cultivating moral precepts and intellectual energy. These are splendid equipments and accompany the true life, but they are not the life. The Life Eternal is in the only begotten Son of God. Out of His inexhaustible life He breathes life into every one who receives Him.

“*THE WAY TO LIFE*”

Narrow is the Gate, and straight the Way that
leadeth unto Life, and few are they who find it.

—Matthew 7:14.

I am the Way, and the truth, and the Life.

—Jesus of Nazareth.

The Regeneration of a sinner is an evidence of power in the highest sphere—moral nature; with the highest prerogative—to change nature; and operating to the highest result—not to create originally, which is great; but to create anew which is greater.

—William Arthur.

O friend, we never choose the better part,
Until we set the Cross up in the heart:
I know I cannot *live* until I *die*—
Till I am nailed upon it wild and high,
And sleep within the tomb full three days dead,
With angels at the foot and at the head.
But then in a great brightness I shall rise,
And walk with stiller feet below the skies.

—Edwin Markham.

III

“THE WAY TO LIFE”

When the Herald of the coming King came preaching in the wilderness of Judea he cried, “*Repent* ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” To the people, greatly wondering in Solomon’s porch, Peter preached, “Repent ye, therefore, and be *converted* that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” In the conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus said, “Except a man be *born again*, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.” The word in the New Testament translated repent means, change your thinking. The word converted, means in the original, to turn upon, to turn back. The term, born again, would be better as well as more literally rendered born from above, for in this birth the children are not born “of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

In these three utterances the entrance into the “Way of Life” is clearly opened. We must change our thinking, forsake our evil thoughts, “repent,” reverse the direction we are going, change our way of doing, “be converted;” accept Jesus, God’s Anointed, believe on His name, and “receive power to become the children of God.” No other way to life can any man open, and no light can il-

lumine the way but that of Him in whom is life, "the life which is the light of men."

No question more vital ever issued from the human heart than the cry, "What must I do to be saved?" The answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," is not only clear and precise, but full and complete, for in it is infolded the whole plan of salvation.

The first thing implied in it is repentance toward God. Now, there are two kinds of repentance spoken of in the Scriptures—one accompanied with sorrow toward God, or Godly sorrow; and the other with sorrow toward self more than toward God, or worldly sorrow. To make clear this part of our subject let us take a case that can at any time be found in real life. A man becomes convinced of the error of his ways. His thoughts are turned upon the life that he has been living, and he finds that it will, if continued, bring him into trouble and end in disaster. He regrets his past course, is sorry on account of his sins, and desires to become reconciled to God and lead a better life. His sincerity is undoubted and he resolves to quit his sinning, to reform, and forthwith turns his resolution into action. Henceforth his outer life is upright and straight-forward, and in the sight of men may be blameless, but if he rises no higher than this plane of living, he will only become a good moralist, or a self-righteous Pharisee. He only reaches *reformation*, not *regeneration*. This is repentance that needs itself to be repented of—a repent-

ance "from dead works" leading to dead works. Repentance toward God is a deeper process and leads to the higher life. The true penitent turns with Godly sorrow from his sins, changes, through the Spirit of all grace, his inmost thoughts and purposes, ceases to do evil and learns to do well in thought as well as in deed. The cry of his heart is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This is "repentance unto life—repentance unto salvation not to be repented of." It does not end in reformation, but in regeneration—the birth into the spiritual life. The heart yields in true penitence, the will bows to God's will, and the soul receives life, which God alone has power to give, and which He can grant, only on the condition of a voluntary return to Him, through Jesus Christ.

Repentance—changing our thoughts, and conversion—reversing our ways, under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, with accompanying faith in Christ, are the conditions of entering into life required of us, and when these are met, our sins are blotted out, the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord, and we henceforth walk in newness of life.

Life is power, and being born from above implies spiritual growth, development, maturity. God, in giving us this new life, gives us a new heart, renews the filial spirit within us, which enables us to look up and cry, "Father;" and "the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

The question here rises how we can each best develop this new life received in the birth from above. We have only to "ask for the old paths wherein is the good way and walk therein." The rules for its culture are already laid down for us. The Christian law of love, purity and holiness is the way and there is no other—plain, simple living, the conscientious culture of every power in us and of every good habit, daily communion with our Father in the Heavens, association with the pure in heart, the giving up ever of the lower for the higher. Traveling along this road, we realize as the years go on, a sense of perpetual enlargement of life. The surface upon which the Divine Breath plays, is steadily broadening. The retina of the heart becomes more sensitive to the light that falls on it from "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." And ever, as we progress, we know that all we have is not a self-creation, but rather a gift received from God. The words of Madame Guyon fit our enlarging experience:

"I love Thee, Lord, but all the love is Thine,
For in Thy Life I live.
I am as nothing, and rejoice to be
Emptied and lost and swallowed up in Thee."

Having entered into the new life, let us cultivate its growth and maturity by sowing Spiritual seed, and we shall bear, as the seasons move on, "the fruit of the Eternal Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." "Sow the seeds of life,—

humbleness, pure-heartedness, love," says F. W. Robertson, "and in the long eternity which lies before the soul, every minutest grain will come up again with an increase of thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold.

"You will reap what you sow—not something else, but that. An act of love makes the soul more loving. A deed of humbleness deepens humbleness. The thing reaped is the very thing sown, multiplied a hundredfold. You have sown a seed of life, you reap life everlasting."

If we would maintain our life in ever-increasing vigor, we must also pray as well as work. Prayer and work cannot be divorced. What God hath joined together let no man presume to put asunder. "Above everything," says Phillips Brooks, "pray for and work for fullness of life; full red blood in the body; full honesty and truth in the mind; and the fullness of a grateful love for the Savior in your heart."

Jesus insisted upon *holiness of life* as the only proof of the new birth, and upon the *new birth* as the only entrance to a holy life. He did this, not to make men despair of salvation, but to lead them to come to Him in order to find rest for their souls. "In His presence death itself departed, and life came in; and when He breathed forth His Spirit, then did He pour out life from Himself and infuse it into others."

God gives life. We receive it. In receiving it we obtain "power to become the children of God"—members of His Spiritual family. "To possess

power is much; to have the prerogative of giving it is more; but to give 'power to become' is among men unknown; for it involves the power of giving life to the dead. Holy Scripture, in speaking of Christ's work upon Nature, employs no such terms. Its language is, 'All things were made by Him.' To make a thing is different from 'giving it power to become.' We can make iron into an engine, but we cannot give it power to become one. Only where life exists is there power to become, and where life does not exist, the prerogative of giving it belongs to none save the Prince of Life only."

The lifeless mote cannot become anything more than a lifeless mote, but the living seed has power to become, under proper conditions, a growing plant, and the living child has power to become a man. Only that in which this mysterious living power has been deposited by Him who is the Fountain of life can become a living, growing, developing being. Even if the life-substance has been once possessed, but has through some adverse influence been lost, that which contained it has no longer "power to become." The seed may be perfect in its most minute structure, but if the hidden life has departed, though the rich soil may bless it, the gentle rain water it, and the solar rays warm it, that seed has no power to become a plant. So he who is "dead through trespasses and sin," though he may reform and strive to elevate himself into a new life, and even receive the blessing of the church, has no power to become a living, spiritual child of God.

Life as manifested in the plant and the animal is very wonderful—the wonder of wonders—yet it is everywhere evanescent. It is continually coming and going, appearing and vanishing. The life that animates the regenerated soul and endows it with never-failing energy, is unchangeable and eternal. It is the life of God that comes into our experience with the true knowledge of God—a knowledge obtained through the vision of the heart rather than through intellectual effort. In the prayer to the Father just before entering the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus said, “This is life eternal that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” God is Life; God is Light; God is Love. To have the life of God in the soul, to walk in the light as He is in the light, and to be one with Him in everlasting love, is to know God—is to have eternal life. Knowing God and eternal life are, therefore, the same and co-eternal. Eternal life is eternal knowledge; they are one. Life eternal, then, is not merely everlasting life—a state of perpetual existence. It is this and much more. It is a state of unending activity and energy, of growing knowledge and blessedness, of joyous service and worship. The soul evermore drinks at the Fountain-head of the River of Life, moves in the light as God is in the light, rejoices in His love, and “beholds the Beauty of the Lord.”

In the Kingdom of God doctrines are forceful and forms are beautiful only in so far as they

become vitalized by the spirit of a renewed mind. Doctrine to him who is born from above, who has passed "out of death into life, out of darkness into light," is not a dead letter, but a law of the Spirit of life. Christianity is not merely a system of doctrine. It is a spiritual force, and the centre, the pith, the transforming, assimilating power of true religion is life. It is this power that enables us to become children of God, to grow up into perfect manhood in Christ Jesus, and to develop and mature the fruit of the Spirit. God puts into the seed life, which, when the conditions of soil and moisture, warmth and light are supplied, means power to become a plant—power to evolve stem and branch, bud and leaf, flower and fruit. It is life, by its inaudible, invisible, intangible energy, that moulds into forms of beauty and elegance all living things.

In our natural life, God gives the life and He also supplies the conditions—air, light, warmth, food and water—for the evolution and energy of life. The elegance and perfection of the living body, in its development and in its maturity, depend upon the efficiency with which the conditions are met. Just here comes in our required work. We cannot originate life, nor cause it to develop an organism different in kind from that which is potential in the germ; nor can we create the conditions of the growth and nutrition of the organism, but we can modify and adjust the conditions so as to affect the growth and nutrition, and cause the living individual to become

sickly and stunted, or well developed and perfect. If we would secure a vigorous and well rounded life, we must look well to the quality and quantity of the conditions. We are in nature co-workers with God.

In the regeneration God also gives the life, and He likewise supplies the conditions. "Who-soever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God"—has in his soul a germ of the life that the Father hath in Himself. This is a higher life than that which fashions the body, and the conditions of its growth and development are of a higher order. Those of the lower life are created and temporal, but the conditions of the higher life are uncreated and eternal. "He that hath the Son hath the life." "I am," said Jesus, "the bread of life." God is the "Fountain of living waters." To the woman at the well Jesus said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up into eternal life." The outshining of the life of the Eternal Word is the light of him who is born into the Kingdom of God. Warmth is another condition of life, and this is found in the unchangable love of the Father, while the Eternal Spirit is the christian's vital breath, for "he lives in the Spirit and walks in the Spirit." Here we have a spiritual, a Divine environment, and the conditions of life in it can never fail; hence life will be maintained in eternal vigor and maturity.

In the spiritual life we are also co-workers with God. Our thoughts, our words, our purposes, our works must all move in accord with the will and word of God. We must feed by faith on the Bread of life and drink at the Fountain of living waters. We must walk in the light of the Lord, abide in His love, and live in the Spirit. He who is the conscious, happy possessor of this life, and keeps his heart in correspondence with its unchanging conditions, will grow and develop into complete manhood in Christ Jesus and, surviving the wreck of physical death, will live on in eternal activity and blessedness. At the grave of Lazarus Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die."

“SAVED BY HIS LIFE”

Because I live ye shall live also.

—John 14:19.

He that hath the Son hath the life; he that
hath not the Son of God hath not the life.

—1 John 5:12.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold I freely give
The Living water; thirsty one,
Stoop down and drink, and live!"
I came to Jesus, and I drank,
Of that Life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.
—Horatius Bonar.

No glory of the Eternal One is higher than this,
"Mighty to save;" no name of God is more adorable
than that of "Savior."
—William Arthur.

Unless you live in Christ, you are dead to God.
—Rowland Hill.

IV

"SAVED BY HIS LIFE"

In an English translation of the oldest hymn to Christ in the possession of the Church are found these exquisitely tender and deeply profound words:

"With Thy life, so sweet and tender,
Save Thy saints, O Christ, we crave."

The death of Christ made our salvation possible. He thereby met the demand of the great sacrificial law, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." By shedding His precious blood in Gethsemane and upon the Cross, He made it possible that "we might become reconciled to God," and that "God might be just and yet the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Christ Jesus was delivered up for our trespasses and raised from the dead for our justification, and because He lives we who believe on Him live also. So teaches St. Paul, the great expositor of Christian doctrine and life. "If while we were enemies," he says, "we were reconciled to God *by the death* of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be *saved by His life*;" or as it was written by the apostle in Greek, "Saved in His life."

But does not the beloved disciple say that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin? Does not

the blood then save? Yes, but in ancient, oriental language, "the blood is the life." In our way of putting ideas into words we would say that the blood represents the life. The blood of Jesus is not literally sprinkled upon the impure heart, thereby "cleansing the conscience from dead works to serve the living God," but His life, represented by the blood, is infused into the soul in the new birth, and thus regenerates, vitalizes and purifies the entire individual, spirit, soul, and body.

"We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God." We have

"Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts his race and taints us all."

It is only necessary to observe the every-day life of the little child, as well as that of the adult, to be convinced of the tendency in us to go astray. We are naturally self-willed, and restive under the restraint of law and order. We endeavor to follow our own impulses and to gratify our appetites and passions, right or wrong; and they are more apt to be wrong than right. We turn our faces toward the world, the flesh, and the devil, and our backs toward heaven, and purity, and God. Notwithstanding the moral restraints thrown around us and the Christian teaching and culture of exemplary parents, we go astray from childhood to manhood, and even to old age, following right along the devices and desires of our own hearts, and thus sooner or later becoming dead through trespasses and sin. We become

dead to God and walk in the darkness of sin and death rather than in the light of life. We seek happiness in the deceptive offers of time and place, forsaking our Creator and Benefactor, the Fountain of living waters, and hewing out for ourselves cisterns whose waters become stale and bitter.

From this state of spiritual death we have no power to resurrect ourselves. Life is an entity—a something over which we have no power except to supply or modify the conditions of its growth and maintenance. We may by mere force of option, reform and live a moral life, but in order to be saved from our sins and lead a new life, following in our hearts as well as in our lives the commandments, the life that is in Jesus, the Christ, must reach down and touch our life, begetting in the soul a new life and lifting us up into higher conditions of living. We are thus born from above—born of the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. The soul in this new birth becomes alive to God, rejoices in the light of His countenance, loves what God loves and hates what God hates, and lives a new, spiritual life, old thoughts and purposes having passed away, while new aspirations, new joys and new hopes have sprung up in their place. Thus we are “saved by His life.” As the sap in the vine flows through the branches, causing them to put forth buds and leaves, and produce blossoms and fruits, so the life of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is ever permeating and renewing the lives of the children

of light, producing peace, joy, love and all the fruits of righteousness. In His life we live and move and have our being.

Now, life is essentially active. In all living forms, from the lowest to the highest, this quality is one of the characteristics of life. It is ever evolving, or renewing and perfecting the organisms that it vitalizes. Thus *growth* is one of the effects of life, and this process may go on indefinitely, or may be time-limited. Many plants complete their growth in one season and die; while others live and grow for untold centuries. All animals, including man, reach their maximum growth within specifically limited periods, but in the case of man life continues, under favorable conditions, to become more vigorous and the mind to develop in force and capacity for many a year after the body ceases to grow. Dr. Lionel Beale found that the little round cells, through which the mind is supposed to act in the surface of the brain, apparently do not grow old but remain fresh and young even during old age. In this fact may lie the cause of the continued evolution of mental and moral power while the body is becoming more and more enfeebled with age. If, therefore, like these little round cells in the cortex of the brain, all the physical conditions of the body were favorable and failed not, life might persist in the individual, increasing in power and beauty for ever.

In plants and animals, however, the inner conditions of life fail, sooner or later, and the exter-

nal conditions are unfavorable, so that life is everywhere evanescent. It is consequently ever coming and going, appearing and disappearing. The life that transforms those who receive the Prince of Life, into the sons of God fails not, and its conditions are favorable and unchangeable. He who possesses this life therefore, will grow in grace and in spiritual power so long as he complies with the conditions of spiritual growth. These are prayer or communion with God, partaking of the bread of life and drinking the living water, walking in the light of the Lord, living in the Spirit, and abiding in God's love.

Here are presented possibilities incalculable. The conditions of growth are not only favorable but they cannot fail, for they are unchangeable and eternal. Even in this life, with so many conditions adverse to spiritual growth, the children of light receive power, not only to become the sons of God, but also to grow into spiritual maturity, for "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and death," and they "work not for the meat that perisheth but for the meat that abideth unto eternal life." This spiritual meat unceasingly supplies the needs of the soul and perfectly sustains and renews the inner life; hence, even while the evening of life is approaching and the shadows are lengthening, and though the outward man is daily perishing the inner man is renewed day by day, and they grow in the knowledge and love of God even to the end of their earthly pilgrimage. Sometimes in the faithful

and saintly disciple this renewing of the spiritual life becomes very marked, while the natural life is failing and flickering in its last feeble throes. Wilbur Fisk, who during all his mature life walked with God, said, when the time for his departure came, though extremely weak, that he felt almost strong enough to bear away his frail, dying body through the air.

To the spiritually born sons of God the life eternal is not a life to be attained in the distant future nor by some mysterious process at death. It is a present possession, a conscious experience that in the eternal future shall stronger and fuller grow. "I feel in myself," says Victor Hugo, "the future life. I am like a forest once cut down. The new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds. You say that the soul is nothing but the resultant of bodily powers. Why then is my soul more luminous when my body begins to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. There I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets, and the roses, as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and verse, history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode,

and song—I have tried them all. But I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say like so many others, ‘I have finished my day’s work,’ but I cannot say ‘I have finished my life.’ My day’s work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight to open with the dawn.”

“He that hath the Son hath the life,” says the Beloved disciple. “Whosoever liveth and believeth on Me,” said Jesus, “shall never die.” He ends his earthly life and the tabernacle in which he sojourns here is taken down and laid away, but he has “a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” In his farewell address to the apostles Jesus said, “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.” To Peter He said, “whither I go thou canst not follow me *now*, but thou shalt follow me *afterward*.” To all He in substance said, “I your Lord and Master, the Maker and Builder of all things, without whom not anything was made, am going away to prepare for you abiding places, that where I am there ye may be also, and behold my glory.” The conditions of life in that blessed abiding place are infinitely more favorable for growth and development than our present environment. But of those conditions it is useless for us even to conjecture; for since there are scenes in our own world that no

description could make clear to our minds, it is evident that but little knowledge could be imparted to us concerning the unseen world which the children of life enter when their earthly life closes. Enough, however, has been revealed to assure us of the blessedness and glory of that "better country." St. Paul, to whom Jesus revealed the glorious gospel after His ascension, was sometimes disturbed by opposing emotions, having a desire to remain with his spiritual children for their good, and also a longing to depart and be with Christ, which was for him far better. There he expected to behold Jesus in His transfigured, glorified body, and be with Him and with the good and great of all ages and countries who, having become reconciled to God by the death of His Son and saved by His life, have passed into the "Unseen Holy" and are "without fault before the Throne of God."

The whole redeemed family of God, those who live in the mansions prepared in our Father's House as well as those who dwell on the earth, are patiently looking forward to the day of their final redemption, when the body, sown in weakness and corruption, shall through the life-giving power of Christ rise in strength and glory, and they with spirit, soul and body reunited and glorified, shall enter into the eternal inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not. When the last living stones, taken out of earth's rough quarries, are shaped and prepared for their places in the living Temple of the Living

God, of which the temple of Solomon was only the rough type, then "the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The redeemed of the Lord, gathered out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation shall then shine forth in the Kingdom of their Father; for "when Christ who is their life shall be manifested then shall they also be manifested with Him in glory." The life of Jesus will so permeate their humanity that they shall never again feel the fatigue and weariness of earth, and they shall no more say, "I am sick." They shall be clothed with strength, and live in never-failing health and beauty. "We are sown in corruption but we rise in power." There will be no alternation of work and rest, of vigor and weariness. We shall subsist in ever-full energy and enthusiasm.

"Whereas in this life," says Schoberlein, "we consist of three elements, body, soul, and spirit, which may be even separated from each other; in the heavenly life the body and soul will be so pervaded with spirit that the entire human being will present but one unitary spiritual life. Wherever the soul may will to be, there it will be able to be. Hence the body will not be a prison, but on the contrary a free home for the soul.

“The body will be the perfect servant of the soul; hence it will be capable of instantly following, and keeping pace with the outgoings of imagination and thought. The law of love, whereby we live in those on whom we fix our heart, will be perfectly reflected in the body. The indwelling of soul in soul will be also the indwelling of body in body. And in this each will find his due place—so that, even as the church of Christ here forms but one body with many members, thus also hereafter saved humanity will form but one organic body, of which we shall all be members, each in his place. And of this organic body, the head, the focal point, the sun, will be Christ Himself. As our souls will eternally live of His life, so our bodies will eternally shine in the radiance of His glorified body.”

We shall then inherit the Kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world. We shall then see the Prince of life and glory as He is, and freed from all adverse conditions, grow more and more like Him in knowledge and beauty for evermore, without being able to reach up and out to the height and broadness of His fullness; for in Him centre all truth, and beauty, and goodness; in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and His transfiguring life, and light, and love pervade the universe. We shall forever live in the life, and light, and love of the Lord Jesus, and His life, and light, and love will evermore live in us. The Kingdom of Heaven—a kingdom without limit in space and without

end in time—will be our eternal inheritance and we shall reign with Christ in peace and glory; and so shall we through eternity as in time be "*saved in His life.*"

To make this eternal salvation possible and real Jesus Christ, God manifested in human form and flesh, laid down His life and took it up again. "The taking away of our sins," says Henry Van Dyke, "means the actual separation from sin by union with the crucified Christ. Our justification means a living entrance into His righteousness in the risen life. The mission of Christ to the inner life was just this: To make such an atonement that sin should no more divide the soul from God: To make such an atonement that the broken law should no more keep the soul at enmity with God: To make such an atonement that the inner life of all who truly live, should be 'not unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again.' "



ETERNAL KNOWLEDGE

The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom;
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
—Proverbs 9:10.

Some have not the knowledge of God.
—1 Corinthians 15:34.

Let no knowledge satisfy but that which lifts above the world, which weans from the world, which makes the world a footstool.

—C. H. Spurgeon.

The question is whether like the Divine Child in the temple we are turning knowledge into wisdom, and whether, understanding more of the mysteries of life, we are feeling more of its sacred law; and whether, having left behind the priests, the scribes, and the doctors and the fathers, we are becoming wise to God.

—F. W. Robertson.

Pleasure is a shadow, wealth is vanity, and power a pageant; but knowledge is ecstatic in enjoyment, perennial in fame, unlimited in space, and infinite in duration.

—De Witt Clinton.

V

ETERNAL KNOWLEDGE

The surface of the brain, from an eighth to a twelfth of an inch in thickness, is composed of minute grayish cells of living matter. This thin stratum constitutes the "common sensorium" in which every faculty, emotion, and impulse of both body and mind has its special location, or centre, where it originates, or terminates, or is reflected, and where it awakens into consciousness. The eye, for example, receives on the retina the image of an object, the impression of which is conveyed through the optic nerves to the special location of vision in the sensorium where it becomes an object of conscious perception. A wave of air produced by the concussion of sound causes a vibration in the auditory organs, the impression is telephoned to the special center of hearing and the perception of sound is there begotten. The same process is true of every sensation, special and general, of the body. When a thought, or an idea from the seen, or from the unseen world, comes into the mind, the impression is made on its special location in the brain, and, being there brought out into consciousness, is transmitted through the appropriate nerves to special organs, or parts of the body. The ideas or objects that beget the emotion of love, or those that produce the aspirations of

hope, for instance, cause these feelings to spring up in the gray matter of the brain, from which they are conveyed by special nerves to the chest, and then referred to that locality, just as the sensation of touch, born into consciousness in the brain, is attributed to the ends of the fingers.

Now, as every faculty, emotion, and impulse has its special center in the brain, the development of that special center will depend upon the use and culture of its particular faculty, emotion, or impulse. In examining the brain, *post mortem*, it has been found in those who had lost an arm, or a leg, the special parts of the brain to which the nerves of the lost members belonged, were partially atrophied. In animals, the mole for example, that have but little use for the eye the optic center is but slightly developed.

We are accustomed to refer the tender emotions, love, mercy, and compassion, to the heart. The ancients referred them to the bowels, and spoke of "bowels of compassion." In fact all the viscera are more or less affected, through reflex action, by the emotions.

The Bible was written for the instruction of the whole human family, and hence it uses mostly the language of the people. The emotional nature, therefore, in the Scriptures, as in other writings, is located in the heart which is merely a muscular organ with little nerve ganglions that send through the appropriate nerves only organic impressions to the brain, while the real organs of emotion are located in the brain itself—a deep-

er center than the heart. This deeper center is the medium of communication between mind and body, between the seen and the unseen; and the force and clearness of perception in any special circle of thought or emotion depend upon the development and culture of its special center in the living cells of the brain.

Of all the parts of the body the cells of the sensorium are the most plastic and the most susceptible of culture, and hence suffer most from neglect. If the sense of sight, for example, be used but little it becomes imperfect; if the ear is not often attuned to the "concordance of sweet sounds" it loses the power of distinguishing them; and if the quality of mercy is not exercised the warm spot in the brain whence it flows becomes cold.

Now, as in the brain are located the faculties through which we apprehend the qualities of matter, the manifestations of force, and the phenomena of life and mind, so there exists in it the special faculty, the spiritual sense, through which we may acquire "the knowledge of the Most High," and enjoy His presence and favor.

This sense may be so weakened by hereditary influence, personal indifference, and lack of culture that it becomes almost or quite dormant, and ceases to respond to divine stimuli, even while other faculties may be developed and cultivated to a high degree; so that of men thus trained it may truly be affirmed with regard to their inability to understand the knowledge of God, "having eyes they see not, and ears they hear not."

In the Bible the power of knowing the Lord is placed rather in the emotional than in the intellectual part of the soul of man. Mere intellectual knowledge of the attributes of God is of a cold and theoretical character, while that which comes through the percipient heart is warm, living and practical, bringing the individual into vital relation to God. Hence "the Lord looketh on the heart," and "with the heart men believeth unto righteousness." Men also "understand with their hearts" the eternal knowledge. Paul in giving thanks for the Ephesians, prays, "that the Father of glory may give unto them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of their heart enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of His calling; what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power toward them that believe." A Chinese convert to Christianity, having been asked to give an illustration of the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," used this figure: "You say that it is hard to worship a God who cannot be seen, and that you have no inward evidence of His actuality. A mirror from which all the quicksilver had dropped away might as well complain that it could find no trace of the objects placed before it. Clean thoughts, clean affections, clean desires have the same function in human nature as the quicksilver has on the back of the mirror. When the heart is filled once more with holy thoughts

the perfect image of God will again be seen there." No eye but that of the pure of heart can see the Father of glory. Through this spiritual sense comes the higher knowledge, the light that illumines the Sacred Scriptures, and the power that moves the hearts of men in the preaching of the word.

This knowledge cannot be attained by study and research. Learning may mingle its rays with those of the higher knowledge, and thus add to its luster, but when learning presumes to emit all the light, that light is "more apt to obscure than to enlighten the Revealed Will of God." Words cannot convey to the mind this Divine knowledge, nor instructors impart it, though they may direct us how to find it. The heart must be moved to action and inspire the mind. Even the words of Jesus, though they are spirit and life, are only so to those who are willing to have His Spirit and His life. For three years He instructed His disciples, but they understood neither Jesus nor His words till after His ascension, when on the day of Pentecost they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The eyes of their hearts were then opened and they began to know the truth. God reveals the knowledge of Himself only through His Spirit, "for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God. Now we received not the spirit

of the world, but the spirit which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given us of God." "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." To them who receive the only-begotten Son of God power is given to become the children of God, and the Spirit of truth is sent to "guide them into all truth." To know God we must come into filial relationship to Him.

The knowledge imparted by the Spirit of God does not consist in knowing His Eternal Essence, nor even His attributes in their fullness. Who knows the essential nature of matter, or of force? Who can understand infinite power, comprehend infinite wisdom, or measure infinite space? The sun is ninety-three million miles from the earth, and they are, though so far apart, near neighbors. We reckon the distance and name it in miles, but no man can form a conception of distance that will take in more than a small part of the space between the sun and the earth. It takes light eight minutes to traverse this distance. There are stars innumerable so far from the earth that it takes thousands of years for light to pass through the intervening space. We can only stand astonished and bewildered in the presence of distance so great—"distance inexpressible by numbers that have names." But God, in whom dwells all fullness, fills all this immeasurable sphere of immensity. Infinite power, and infinite wisdom, and infinite goodness extend beyond the utmost periphery of the starry uni-

verse. Is not God then, in the language of science, unknowable? "Who by searching can find out God." We cannot, it is true, grasp infinite power, but we can look upon visible manifestations of it; nor can we comprehend infinite space, yet we can measure fractional portions of it: nor can we attain unlimited knowledge and wisdom, but we can learn within a limited range and apply our hearts to know wisdom. We cannot measure the fullness of God's life and light and love, but we can feel the vital energy of His life, walk in His light, and enjoy the blessedness of His love.

The eternal knowledge cannot be acquired by studying the works of God nor even by reading the Scriptures. A man may give his life to these studies and yet never come to know God. You may study for years your neighbor in his works and words, and yet not know him as you know your close friend. To know a man you must feel the pulsations of his heart, be in sympathy with his purposes, and be moved by his spirit. Likewise in learning the knowledge of God, we must come into communion with Him, become inspired by His Spirit, abide in His love, and bring every thought, emotion, and impulse into accord with His will. To have the life of God in the soul, to walk in the light of His life, to dwell in His love, is to know God. "Every one," says the Beloved disciple, "that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." No two persons can know each other till they become one

in love and one in spirit. No one can know God, and, in the sense of recognition, be known of God till he becomes one with God. As the light, and the heat, and the chemical force of the sunbeam constitute one white wave of light that illumines the earth and discloses the sun, so the life of the Eternal Word, and the light which is the outshining of that life, and love which is the warmth of that life form one white wave of spiritual light that illumines the soul and reveals God in His beauty and glory.

If scholars would give more thought to the higher knowledge, and less to the "higher criticism," there would be less fault-finding with the Bible and better interpretation of its teaching. Concentrate all the light of science, all the light of history, and all the light of scholarship on the pages of the grand old Book, but above all let the brighter light of "the wisdom that cometh from above" illumine both the mind and the sacred page in our study of it. The same Spirit that moved holy men of old to write the Scriptures must move the mind and the heart of him who studies them. Being thus moved, he receives "the unction from the Holy One." "The anointing," says St. John, "which ye have received from Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man should teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

We study for the purpose of learning, yet this is not in many things the best method of acquir-

ing knowledge. Experience is often the best and sometimes the only way of learning much that helps to fill out life. This is the method that Jesus gave us for attaining eternal knowledge. "If any man wills to do His will," said Jesus, "he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." What, it may be asked, is the will of God? "This is the will of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." Faith in Christ works by love, and "love is the fulfilling of the law." Love is the inner force that moves mind and heart to keep the law in thought, word and deed. This opens up the glorious realm of spiritual knowledge and puts the soul under the tuition of the Holy Spirit. "Hereby know we that we abide in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit."

"The world passeth away and the lust thereof." Man's work is perishable and transitory. Most of the literature of the world passes away with the generation that produces it. Even in Science most of the authorities of today will be laid on the shelf tomorrow. "Whether there be knowledge it shall pass away." Only heart knowledge endures. He who knows God abides in love, and love does not pass away but abides forever.

In one of our great universities a student said to one of his classmates: "It is a pity you are a Christian. Religion contracts the mind, and prevents broadness in scholarship and largeness of view." The reverse of this is truth and fact.

The more pure in heart a man becomes the more vividly does he see and appreciate the beauty and sublimity of the world. "What we see in nature is to some extent a question of intellect. But the vision of the world's glory is far more a question of the moral and spiritual than it is of the intellectual." A poor man said: "When I went home on the night that God forgave my sins and revealed His love in my heart, I thought that the stars looked brighter than I had ever seen them look before." When a man has been long sick and takes his first walk in the fields, he becomes ecstatic over a buttercup; he stops at a common weed as if it were a lily; he thinks a blackbird beautiful as a bird of paradise. All this is more intensely true when God heals the sickness of the soul, removes the burden of the conscience, and the hardened sinner, endowed with the power of the spiritual life, walks in the eternal sunshine. Blessed are the pure in heart for they see God—they see everything. Nature becomes glorified.

"The earth is crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God."

Christianity, far from dwarfing the intellect, gives it almost unlimited expansion. It enables the mind and heart to read nature in the light of truth, and look through nature up to the Creator of nature. "Godliness and righteousness make science possible. Godliness creates that infinite curiosity of soul which is the life of science, and righteousness secures that condition of things

which makes the prosecution of science possible." Some of our scientists are trying to make us believe that religion is opposed to science. They lose sight of men like Galileo and Kepler, Newton and Faraday, and Lord Kelvin. They cannot shut our eyes to the fact that science always follows the Cross.

"Sin—that is, pride, selfishness, sensuality, materialism—spoils the intellectual life of men. All righteousness and spiritual living develop the intellectual life also. Some of our literary teachers are anxious to teach us another doctrine. They tell us that art is trammled by moral rules; it wants absolute freedom. Yet Ruskin assures us that none of the great masters had faults of character but those faults told in their works, mysteriously straining and darkening the prismatic splendors of their masterpieces. These antinomian teachers tell us that poetry demands license. 'Well ordered feelings,' they say, 'a balanced mind, and regular habits have seldom resulted in poetry, hardly ever in poetry of the highest order.' They forget men like Dante and Milton; like Tennyson and Browning, and Longfellow. How strange is the argument that licentiousness of thought and feeling can improve art and literature! Men never think that license is desirable for corporeal perfection; that if you are to improve your complexion you are to have the small pox; that men can only attain athletic strength and grace through a course of rheumatism and consumption. No, no; it is useless to

treat us to such pitiful nonsense. We know that temperance and purity are essential to physical perfection, and temperance and purity, and truth of life are even more essential to the full perfection and splendor of human genius." All intellectual life becomes deeper, fuller, nobler as the spiritual life grows deeper, purer and more intense.

The higher life enlarges and elevates the intellect and enthuses the heart. The whole realm of Nature contributes to the Christian's outlook and enjoyment, and the Book containing the Written Revelation furnishes themes that beget the most exalted thought and excite the most expansive sympathy and love. All that the microscope can reveal in the world of the "infinitely little," all that the telescope can disclose in the world of infinite space, all that science can find out about what God has made may form part of his intellectual wealth. He is not only a child of time but also of eternity,—not a citizen of this world alone but of all worlds. As a child of God, endowed with "eternal knowledge," he finds in Christ heirship to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled and eternal. Christ Jesus is King of all kingdoms, "King of all worlds, both of space and time." He is heir of all things, and admits the spiritually-born and loyal children of His Father to co-heirship with Himself. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." There is no narrowness in this outlook. It was no mere outburst of emotion that moved the

greatest of the apostles to exclaim: "Yea, verily and I count all things to be loss"—all the splendid literature of the Greeks, all the accumulated learning of the Orient, all the immunities of Roman citizenship, all the possibilities of preferment and honors—"I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Encircled in this excelling knowledge is the fullness of the Godhead; the riches of Divine grace; the unspeakable gift of God; the lifegiving presence of the Eternal Spirit; the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; the immensity and persistence of God's love; in a word, "the Beauty of the Lord our God."

*ETERNAL KNOWLEDGE: HOW
TO ATTAIN IT*

Because thou hast asked Wisdom and Knowledge for thyself, Wisdom and Knowledge are granted unto thee.

—2 Chronicles 1:11, 12.

The opening of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

—Psalm 119:130.

If our plans are not for time but for eternity, our knowledge, and therefore our love to God, to each other, to everything, will progress forever. And the attainment of this heavenly wisdom requires neither ecstasy, nor revelation, but prayer, and watchfulness, and observation and solemn thought.

Two great rules for its attainment are simple enough—Never forget what and where you are, and grieve not the Holy Spirit, for “If a man wills to do God’s will he shall know of the doctrine.”

—Charles Kingsley.

Knowledge is folly unless grace guide it.

—George Herbert.

VI

ETERNAL KNOWLEDGE: HOW TO ATTAIN IT

A barrister who read the preceding paper said to the author: "You have succeeded in showing that there is Eternal Knowledge, but you have not showed how to attain it."

The answer to the question implied in the statement above requires broader knowledge and higher wisdom than have been acquired by the world's great teachers. To know one's self was the highest knowledge attained in ancient civilization. When the inquiring Greek attempted to look still higher his vision failed, and there he erected an altar, dedicating it

"TO THE UNKNOWN GOD."

"Where then shall wisdom be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
Man knoweth not the price thereof;
Neither is it found in the land of the living.
It cannot be gotten for gold;
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof."

Man by education and culture alone cannot climb to the table-land of the higher knowledge. He cannot of himself even discover the way.

"That path no bird of prey knoweth,
And the sons of pride have not trodden it."

Out of the "Unseen Holy," far above the confusion and din of earth's aspirants for knowledge and wisdom, comes a cheering voice sweetly calling,

"Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom,
And to depart from evil is understanding."

"All the world is but an orphanage," says Ruskin, "so long as its children know not God, their father; and all wisdom and knowledge is only more bewildering darkness so long as you have not taught them the fear of the Lord." The wisdom writers of the Hebrew Scriptures, without a dissenting voice, affirm that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." That is to say there is no true wisdom unless it has its inception in the fear of God and keeps us from sin. "The children of this world," said the Great Teacher, "are wiser in their generation than the children of light," that is, they are wiser in the wisdom of this life, and often more prosperous and more successful, as the world goes, than the children of light, but their wisdom is not that which is from above, "that is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and without hypocrisy."

Now the fear of the Lord is not akin to fearfulness, not an apprehension of evil, but a feeling that moves the soul to loving service, that veils the face in the Divine Presence, and cries, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." "The

secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Those who have this secret, who are born of the Spirit into the new life of loving fear, move in a spiritual environment which enables them to grow in wisdom and to increase in the knowledge and love of God our Savior.

God is "the one Source of all that is fair and good," but we cannot by merely studying the fair and good, acquire a knowledge of their Source. The world by the wisdom of science and philosophy knows not God. A true knowledge of God, the Eternal Father, cannot be attained through the persistence of mental effort and culture, nor by "advances through stages of admiration." This knowledge comes only in the new spiritual birth and in the new life as it develops through penitence, faith and prayer. The penitent, thus born into a new life in Christ Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit unto good works and good thoughts, in the purity of a renewed heart, beholds God and abides in peace and joy. Unless in the new life we see the light of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ we cannot see and know God. "The spirit of Jesus," says A. J. Gordon, "can alone reveal to men the Lordship of Jesus, and this key of knowledge the Holy Spirit will never put into the hand of any man, however learned. As it is written that Christ is the 'raying forth' of the Father's glory and 'the express image of his person,' thus by a beautiful figure reminding us that as we can only see the sun in the rays

of the sun, so we can only know God in Jesus Christ who is the manifestation of God. It is so likewise between the second and third persons of the Trinity. Christ is the image of the invisible God; the Holy Spirit is the invisible image of Christ. As Jesus manifests the Father outwardly, the Spirit manifests Jesus inwardly, forming Him within us as the hidden man of the heart, imaging Him to the spirit by an interior impression which no intellectual instruction, however diligent, can effect."

One of the conditions of growth in Divine Knowledge, as above stated, and the most important of them is prayer, for without unceasing prayer the other conditions will fail. "Real knowledge," says Thomas Arnold, of Rugby, "like everything else of the highest value, is not to be obtained easily. It must be worked for—studied for—thought for—and above all it must be prayed for." Earthly knowledge is acquired as the reward of resolute labor in the appropriate exercise of the natural faculties, but education in the higher world cannot be secured by labor alone, for that teaching comes only through petition. In the book of wisdom, seventh chapter and sixth verse, is found this remarkable statement:

"I willed (resolutely desired) and sense was given me.
I prayed and the spirit of wisdom came upon me.
And I set her before (preferred her to) kingdoms and
thrones."

It looks as though Francis Bacon had this

text in mind when he quaintly but forcibly said "that the sense of man carrieth a resemblance with the sun, which, as we see, openeth and revealeth all the terrestrial globe; but then again it obscureth and concealeth the stars and celestial globe; so doth the sense discover natural things, but it darkeneth and shutteth up divine."

Of this text Ruskin says, "You must begin your education with the distinct resolution to know what is true, and the choice of the straight and rough road to such knowledge. This choice is offered to every youth and maid at some moment of their life;—choice between the easy, downward road, so broad that we can dance down it in companies, and the steep, narrow way which we must enter alone. Then, and for many a day afterward, they need that form of persistent option and will; but day by day the 'Sense' of the righteousness they have done deepens on them, not in consequence of the effort, but by gift granted in reward of it. And the sense of the difference between right and wrong, and between beautiful and unbeautiful things, is confirmed in the heroic, and fulfilled in the industrious soul.

"That is the process of education in the earthly sciences and the morality connected with them. Reward given to faithful volition.

"Next, when moral and physical senses are perfect, comes the desire for education in the higher world, where the senses are no more our Teachers, but the Maker of the senses. And

that teaching we cannot get by labor, but only by petition.

"I prayed and the Spirit of wisdom (not, you observe, *was given*, but) *came* upon me. The *personal* power of Wisdom, the Santa Sophia to whom the first Christian church was dedicated. This higher wisdom, governing by her presence all earthly conduct, and by her teaching all earthly art, is obtained only by prayer."

"For knowledge to become wisdom," says W. Mountford, "and for the soul to grow, the soul must become rooted in God; and it is through prayer that there comes to us that which is the strength of our strength and the virtue of our virtue, the Holy Spirit."

The time in which we are living has been characterized as "a prayerless age." Men are too busy to pray, too intently engaged in temporal affairs to give attention to things that pertain to the unseen and eternal. In this state of mind the tendency is to become self-sufficient, and forgetful of "the Father of lights from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift." They thus fail to secure the supreme blessings of life. These depend upon a prayerful life, and come upon us on our compliance with the conditions expressed in the promise, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened unto you."

In the blindness of our hearts we do not always know what we ought to pray for, nor how to ask, where language often fails, for the blessings that

meet the spiritual needs of the soul. But in our immortal longings and earnest prayer "the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Our Father in the heavens is ever ready to answer effectual, fervent prayer, "uttered or unexpressed." He freely gives knowledge divine and wisdom to all who "ask in faith, nothing wavering or doubting." Therefore, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

To prayer must be added watchfulness lest we become ensnared in temptation, when our light shall become darkness, and our knowledge weakness. Watching must be accompanied with prayer. "Watch in all things. Watch unto prayer."

Waiting on the Lord in prayerful, thoughtful meditation upon His works, in hearing His word preached, and in attendance upon the appointed means of Grace will enable us to grow in the wisdom and knowledge that are eternal.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." He who seeks to have the Spirit of Wisdom come upon him and abide with him in answer to prayer must lead a holy life, denying himself, not only all ungodliness and

worldly lusts, but also, if need be, giving up to a greater or less degree the good things of life, and laying aside every weight, must toil and strive, in the Spirit of prayer, in order to become proficient in the knowledge of the Most High. Prayer is the condition on which God gives the Wisdom that cometh from above, and unceasing prayer is the condition on which He keeps the recipient in its clear atmosphere. Who ceases to pray restores the dominion of the devil.

The last to be considered, though not the least in importance, of the means of becoming wise unto salvation is the reverent, prayerful study of the Sacred Scriptures, whose blessed light, shining upon the works of God, transforms them into mirrors reflecting the Beauty of the Lord. "The knowledge of man is as the waters," says Bacon, "some descending from above, and some springing up from beneath; the one informed by the light of nature, the other inspired by Divine Revelation."

The discovery of truth in God's Works, as well as in His Word, enlarges the horizon of our knowledge whenever faith, generated in the heart by the Spirit of all grace, apprehends God as the

"Lord of all being, throned afar,
Whose glory flames from Sun and star."

Studying in the attitude of prayer and faith the works of God, after the Spirit of Wisdom has enlightened the soul, gives us clearer ideas of His Beauty, and cultivates the knowledge and wisdom that abide.

Nature reveals God through His works in space and time; the Bible reveals Him as the timeless One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, and whose throne is set above all heavens. His Works reveal His power and Wisdom; His word makes known His purposes and love. The two Revelations are complementary, and united constitute "the Glorious Temple, with its magnificent proportions, shapely columns, rare devices, choicest ornaments," and most blessed lights, in which God manifests Himself to the devout worshiper.

The two Books bespeak the same Great Author. The Bible, like Nature, has its heights and depths, its joyous landscapes and arid deserts, its lights and shadows, its mysteries and simplicities. To the ordinary observer, without the light of science, the beautiful order and unvarying laws of nature work unsuspected back of the apparently confused phenomena. So, without the spirit of prayer and faith, the self-contained student of the Bible fails to discover its order and harmony, its truth and beauty.

Some of the evidences of the Divineness of the Bible are open only to the learned, but most of them are within the common reach; and there is one kind of evidence, apart from and above all others, that is not concealed in libraries. It is open to all and requires no critical learning, nor searching of antiquity. It is the Voice of the Book—a voice that speaks in no earthly tone. It is a Voice of the Holy One, saying, "Be ye

holy, for I am Holy." It is a voice of warning, crying, "Turn ye, for why will ye die?" It is a voice of love, calling, "Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." It is a voice of sadness, complaining, "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life." It is a voice of promise declaring, "He that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." The soul may not all at once hear this Divine tone in every part of the Book, but hearing it in any part, it hears a tone that rings in no other book, and feeling that it is God's own Voice, it is sure that the book is God's Book. Amid the din of life's many voices and in the wild tumult of passion within, the soul may not always hear this Divine Voice, or hear it but faintly.

"The Bible is a plain old book," says Heine, "modest as nature and as simple too—like the sun that warms, or the bread that nourishes us. It is indeed justly called Holy Writ. It is God's work, like a tree, like a flower, like man himself. It is the Word of God."

Whittier knew the value of the plain old Book, as compared with other books, when he wrote:

"We search the world for truth, we cull
The good, the true, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From the old flower-fields of the soul;
And, weary seekers for the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the book our mothers read."

Sir Walter Scott, when nearing the end of life's journey, said to his son-in-law, "Read to me."

"What book shall I read," asked Lockhart. "There is but One," replied the dying sage. If, then, the Bible is a book which so stands apart from all other books that a scholar, and author of world-wide fame, when nearing the end of his course, says of it, "There is but One Book," surely it concerns us to ask most earnestly, "What is that book?" Let a learned Bishop answer: "It is human history with the flesh off, so that we can see motives, hidden powers, souls, and Soul of all things. It is human history in four words—union, disunion, reconstruction, reunion. It is, first, the union designed between man and God in heredity, companionship, helpfulness, and destiny. Then it is disunion when man broke out into disobedience of law, and therefore had all its energies, potent to bless, necessarily perverted to restraint. Then it is a record of God's efforts through millennia at reconstruction of man's lost powers and unities. It is finally reunion perfected, illustrated in the God-man walking the earth, showing the etiquette of heaven and the possibilities of man reunited to God. It was Lessing who first defined the Bible as the record of the Divine education of the race. Looked at in this way, perplexities vanish, and all becomes clear as light itself. We do not take a microscope to study in it statistics, geology, and a hundred other ologies, all right in themselves, but we come open-eyed and open-hearted to ask 'Does it teach salvation?' The heavens are the open book of astronomy, the earth of geology. But the Bible is the open book of sal-

vation from sin. And there is an infallible Teacher of the Book," even the Spirit of truth.

Let us then search the Scriptures. They contain the words of eternal life and eternal knowledge, and they testify of Him who is the author of eternal salvation, who is Lord of all being, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, who will, in answer to the prayer of faith, "make our love abound more and more in knowledge and in all discernment; that we may approve the things that are excellent; that we may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God."

Having acquired the knowledge that is eternal, let us apply it in our every-day life. Then we shall attain blessedness and adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. The highest knowledge moves us to do justly, to love mercy, and to work humbly with God, who approves service as well as worship, and loves righteousness and kind deeds more even than offerings and sacrifice. In its pure light let us live and work in doing our duty to our God, to our neighbor, and to ourselves. Denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, let us live soberly, and righteously, and godly in all our ways, ever remembering that godliness, which is the practical expression of the eternal knowledge, excludes everything that is bad and includes all that is good. Let us, like Kepler, strive "To think God's thoughts after Him," and weave them into our daily life.

L I G H T

The Lord is my light.

—Psalm 27:1.

God is Light.

—1 John 1:5.

Hail, Holy Light! offspring of heaven firstborn;
Or of the Eternal, co-eternal beam
May I express thee unblamed? Since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity; dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright Essence uncreate.
Or hearest thou rather pure etherial wave
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun
Before the Heaven thou wert; and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.

—Milton.

Light is the Shekinah of the Divine Presence
in Nature.

—F. W. Upham.

God is truth and light is His shadow.

—Plato.

VII

LIGHT

Next to Life the most subtle and most wonderful object within the circle of human knowledge is Light. Of its essential nature nothing is known. Only its properties and powers come within the range of our observation. Though it reveals to the sense of sight the material universe, overspreading both earth and sky with beauty, garnishing the heavens, lighting up the hills, sparkling in the gem, and "making the blooming bush glow as if with the presence of God," it persists in hiding itself, continuing unrevealed to the eye and to the intellect.

Science has accepted the theory that light is a mode of motion similar to that of sound. This theory may, however, in the future become displaced by the electro-magnetic theory; but whatever theory may hold the scientific mind light will remain unchanged in its nature and action. The phenomena of light are analogous to those of sound. Both obey the same laws and are assumed to be motions of oscillation which, like the propagation of waves in water, take place by a series of vibrations. But while sound is carried along on waves of air light traverses space in the presence or absence of the atmospheric gases. Thus its vibration is evidently carried to the eye by a medium very different from air, called luminif-

erous ether, which is of a nature so subtle that it entirely escapes our senses. Taking up, as is supposed, the molecular tremors of luminous bodies it conveys them with inconceivable velocity to our organs of vision, and reveals not only the forms of terrestrial objects, but also the existence of celestial orbs countless millions of miles distant.

“The ether suffers no rupture of continuity at the surface of the eye; the molecular spaces of the various humors are filled with it; hence the waves generated by a luminous body can cross these humors and impinge on the optic nerve at the back of the eye. Thus the sensation of light reduces itself to the communication of motion. Up to this point we deal with pure mechanics, but the subsequent translation of the shock of the etherial waves into consciousness eludes the analysis of science.”

We know that the image, formed by the rays of light on the retina, is conveyed by the optic nerves to the center of vision in the grey matter of the brain and there, becoming mirrored in the consciousness, may be retained as an object of thought; but the rays of light that form the image refuse to be photographed on the sensitive plate of the optic nerve, and thus escape the scrutiny of the most subtle investigation.

Light fills all space, infusing itself through every object and taking its nature. It dances in the aurora, flashes out in the storm-cloud, glows in the sun, breaks into colors in the rain-

bow, sparkles in the diamond. The most brilliant of all things, it is dark in black quartz, the hottest of all things, it is cold in ice; the softest of all things, it is hard in steel; and though surpassing all things in energy, it is quiescent in flint. Yet, whether in motion or at rest the sense of sight cannot discern it nor the sense of touch reach it. Then, "Where is the way to the dwelling place of light?" The scientist has not found it, nor the philosopher discovered it. They are teaching that light is a mode of motion. "This cloaks ignorance with a word as in the case of the word gravitation. It is merely the putting forth of a name as an explanation. In that word men of science no more find the secret of Light than unscientific men find it in the universal effects of its indispensable presence and power in nature and life. There cannot be motion without force, and what is that force, that omnipotent force which everywhere gives motion? How does it originate? Who gives that force its many properties and powers, its myriads of millions of effects in the heavens and the earth? Who guides them? Who controls them?"

In a recent lecture on the Roentgen rays, Dr. Ames, of the Johns Hopkins University, said: "Our ideas of nature are based on two apparently distinct things. One is ordinary matter, which appeals to our senses; as, for example, a table, a glass of water; the other is what is called ether, which is a medium permeating all the spaces, large and small, between different por-

tions of ordinary matter. The ether is between us and the sun and the stars; it is also between the molecules of matter. We are constantly hoping to find the connection between matter and ether. If we succeed, we will then understand the action of light, electricity, and magnetism."

It is clear from this statement that science is still seeking to gain a position from which the action of light can be understood. It is very doubtful, however, whether this desired point will ever be reached, while the nature of light, as an object of scientific investigation, lies entirely beyond the realm of science.

Our infinite, eternal Creator has adopted two methods of revealing Himself to men which reflect light upon each other—one through His works, the other in human language. The Written Revelation not only gives the principles and precepts necessary for our moral and spiritual life, but also makes known the goodness, the kindness, the infinite love of the Creator, and the great facts in the creation and government of the Kingdom of Nature. It covers everything, and thus teaches much that cannot be learned, or is only dimly seen in the things that are made. Its unity and its fulness, as well as its silences, are marvelously similar to those of Nature and declare the same Great Author. With genius and fine critical insight, blended with reverence, Lord Kelvin declares: "Its words are remarkable—miraculous they seem—in that character of reserve which leaves open to reason all that

reason may be able to attain. The meaning of its words seems always to be ahead of science."

Throughout the ancient world the idea long prevailed that matter in all its various forms is everywhere and always one and essentially the same substance or essence. In the modern world the study of nature's phenomena tends to the conclusion that all the countless changes going on in matter are due to one and the same force acting under varying conditions. Science may some day discover that force to be the element named, in the Written Revelation, Light. She has recently made the startling discovery that light can be weighed. This fact goes far toward proving the contention that light is substance.

Light flashed out through the depths of space before the work of creating the solar system commenced. While the Spirit of God was moving upon the waters of infinity, "God said, let there be light; and there was light." Then and there was imparted to the universe the power that moves the worlds in their orbits, that twinkles in the stars and flashes in the cloud; that lifts up the masses of watery vapor into the air and warms into vital energy the living germ; that reveals to sight the material world and illumines the realm where thought reigns. Under varying and appropriate conditions it transforms itself into light, heat, electricity, or magnetism. This marvelous all-pervading element is every where present; in the opaque body as well as in the

transparent, in the dark space as well as in the illuminated. It is estimated that there are ten thousand foot-tons of this power in every cubic foot of space.

Darkness was the symbol of God's presence in the cloud on Mt. Sinai, and in the cloud on the Mercy Seat. "All the men of Israel assembled themselves unto King Solomon, and it came to pass that the cloud filled the House of the Lord so that the priests could not stand to minister before the Lord, for the glory of the Lord had filled the House of the Lord; then spake Solomon, the Lord said He would dwell in the thick darkness." God is also revealed as dwelling in the light. In one of ancient Israel's hymns of praise occur these words: "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great, who coverest Thyself with Light as with a garment." These words are in unison with an utterance in one of the latest writings of the Holy Scriptures—an ascription of "glory and strength" to "God who quickeneth all things, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone hath immortality, dwelling in the Light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen or can see." In these Scriptures God is represented as dwelling in "the thick darkness," and also in "unapproachable Light." God dwells in light so intensely brilliant that to mortal eyes it would be a consuming fire, and also "He is the King invisible" dwelling in "the thick darkness." How can statements so opposite be reconciled? Excess of

light to us becomes darkness. The darkness then, in which God was said to dwell, and which was before time began to be reckoned, may have been Light which to mortals would have been darkness—an insufferable, annihilating brightness, for no man can see God and live.

In the sixth chapter of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, it is revealed that "light was commanded to shine out of darkness." Now darkness is not eternal. It is a condition effected through the will of the Creator. Light is the eternal garment of God, and since God abides ever and is everywhere, filling not only space and time but also eternity, there is nothing hid from the light of His presence. "God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all." If then to finite beings light becomes transformed into shade, into twilight, or into darkness, the change must be effected by conditions established by Divine Power. God Himself, through His inspired prophet said, "I form the light and create darkness." When, therefore, God said, "Let there be light," may not the Creating Word have so tempered the unapproachable Light in which He dwelt as to render it bearable and pleasant to created vision, and make created life possible in the heavens and on the earth? If this idea is correct, light is the softened outshining of the ineffably glorious Light in which God eternally dwells.

In the action of the Roentgen rays we have a faint shadowgraph of the action of light in the sight of God. As in the action of these rays, whether lucid, electric, or magnetic, they pass

through opaque bodies and illuminate them so the Light in which our Omniscient Creator dwells, shines through and through every life and illuminates every atom of every world, thus laying, "all things naked and open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." "The eyes of the Lord are in every place. The darkness and the light are both alike to Him. The night shineth as the day."

To the Jews Jesus said, "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in Himself." And again He said, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." In the fourth verse of the prologue to St. John's Gospel occurs this marvelous utterance, affirmed of the Eternal Word: "That which was made in Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men." It becomes us to consider with awe words that so far transcend the heights of merely human thought and expression. They reveal the intimate relation of life and light. Life is here seen to be effulgent. It shines out through the living being, and the higher and more intense is the individual life the more brilliant is the light of that life. So great was the Life in Jesus the Christ that its Light illumines every man that comes into the world. He is the Fountain of life, He is the source of light, and as they blend in Him, so in the things that are made light is always associated with life. Wherever life is there also is light, differently named according to the conditions under which it is manifested. In the soul

it is spiritual light, in the mind, intellectual light, in the animal, the light of instinct; while in the material world it is cosmic light.

Out of the inexhaustible light in which He dwelt in Eternity God illuminated the universe, and to every living creature He has given light according to its needs. In the lower forms of life, the feeble light that is in them is, for the most part, not apparent to the sense of sight; yet in some cases the latent light becomes effulgent, as in the glow-worm and the firefly, while in the higher forms of life it plays upon the countenance and flashes out through the eye.

In man, possessing the gifts common to the living world, God has caused to shine a special light, which with its attendant endowments lifts him above the animal level, and places him on the plane of moral and religious culture and responsibility. No man is deprived of his needed measure of light, which if earnestly and prayerfully followed will illumine more and more the way of truth and righteousness. "Unto the upright ariseth light in darkness," and "the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." On the other hand, when this Divinely-given light is not followed but is neglected and finally allowed to burn out, the dark shadows of spiritual night settle down upon the disobedient individual. Jesus, in whom shines "the true Light that illumines every man that comes into the world," said: "If the light that is in thee becomes darkness, how great is that darkness!"

As our all-powerful, all-wise, all-loving Creator has so modified the light of the material world as to render it pleasant and useful to the eye, so He has in His Written Revelation caused its light to shine with modified radiance upon our spiritual vision. The uniform brightness of the noonday is only for the Infinite. For finite beings, if to them light comes at all, it must come in the mellow tints of the sunset, and in the mild hues of the rainbow, which only becomes visible when there is rain as well as sunshine.

“Only the prism’s obstruction shows aright
The secret of a sunbeam, breaks its light
Into the jeweled bow from blanket white;
So may a glory from defect arise.”

The light which shines out from the books of the Written Word comes to us modified by the individuality of the writer. “It comes to us unchanged in its essence, because that is unchangeable, but still reflected and refracted by the medium through which it has passed. The Light of heaven, like the light of day, can only reach us through earthly mediums. The sunlight, lest it should blind us with its brightness, must pass through the atmosphere with its layers of vapor, visible and invisible, it must glance from a myriad surfaces; it must fire the mountain tops, and blaze upon the sea, and be colored by the evening clouds. And yet, wherever it falls, however it is modified, it is always beneficent—even more beneficent from the changes to which it is subjected—because it is the sunlight still. And

in the same way, to suit our finite capacities, the Light of heaven also must pass through human instrumentality. It must display blessed varieties of hue and graduated intensities of radiance, according as it comes to us through the mind of a Moses or of an Isaiah, of a St. James or a St. Paul. But of itself it can never lead astray, because it is Light from heaven. The mystic light which, as Jewish legend tells us, gleamed over the oracular gems of Aaron's breastplate, was ardent now with the azure of the sapphire, now with the deep green of the emerald, now with the softer luster of the amethyst. Even so does the light of inspiration alternately blaze or glow in the fiery heart of the apostle to the Gentiles, in the loving tenderness of St. John the Divine, in the stern and lofty morality of St. James the Lord's brother."

"Thy Word," says one of the poets of Israel, "is a lamp unto my feet and a light in my path." In the Bible all the books, like the stars in the sky, are ablaze with the Light of heaven, each emitting different degrees of radiance and varieties of hue, while the same Light shines through them all. Light is one of the golden threads that runs through the warp of the Bible, one of the refrains that again and again vibrates on the pen of inspiration. The Bible opens with the Divine command, "Let there be light," and closes with words revealing that God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, is Himself Light. "God is Light" writes the aged disciple whom Jesus loved.

"Into those three words," says Canon Farrar, "St. John compresses the substance of his message and utters one of those great final truths, which, since they cannot be transcended, mark the close of Revelation. It is not introduced abruptly nor disconnectedly, but it requires a knowledge of his gospel to see its force. There too, in the same order we have, first, the Word, then Life, then Light, and there we see that the Light is the highest manifestation of the Life, in relation to men; so that the epitome of the gospel, and the epitome of the Life of Christ, as regards the world, is this—that the Light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. But when man receives the Life as Light, he also reflects it, and so becomes a child of Light. In these words, therefore, as in God is love, St. John sums up all the meaning of his Gospel, although in the Gospel neither of the expressions occurs. Yet Christ is there called Light because He is one with the Father, and because He manifests the Father as Light.

"But what is the meaning of this final Revelation that God is Light? The only answer which we can give is, that of all existing things not one is so pure, so abstract, so glorious, so beneficent, so incapable of stain or admixture as earthly light, and earthly light is but the analogue of the Light which is immaterial and Divine." We would be nearer the truth, were we to say that earthly light is but the modified action of the Light that is immaterial and Divine.

May we not, with the modesty and reverence becoming us when speaking of God, look a little more deeply into the meaning of this final revelation? God is spirit. God, the Eternal Spirit, is Life, Light, Love. He has Life in Himself, is robed in Light, dwells in Love. In Him there is no shadow of mortality, no darkness whatever, nothing unlovely. It seems clear therefore that St. John stated a simple, though to us unfathomable truth, in plain terms, when he was inspired to write, "God is Light." From this and other Scriptures already considered the conclusion is reached that earthly light is the softened outshining of the "Eternal Beam."

In this final revelation that God is Life, Light, Love, He has probably granted us the highest, clearest knowledge of Himself that it is possible to give in language. He has thus in the closing book of Holy Scripture, unfolded to us those final truths relating to His Being, beyond which it is impossible for us to look, but in the light of which we may with profit and delight study the whole Revelation of God our Father, in His Works, in History, in His Written Word, and in His only begotten son.

Nature, the beautiful and sublime exhibition of God's handiwork, in the visible outworking of her unseen forces, is ever unfolding more and more to the earnest student the Divine Hand which fashions all that we see, and is ever pointing more and more clearly to the infinite power that passed from the Voice of the Creator into the cre-

ated when He commanded and the universe stood firm, every star moving in its appointed orbit, and the sun with his attendant worlds contributing to the universal harmony, so that no note of discord in the "music of the spheres" has ever been struck since "the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Everywhere and in every thing the uniformity of Nature is so persistent and so unvarying that we implicitly rely upon her on-going for the outcome of tomorrow as well as today, and conform our plans and work to her working forces and laws. The outward and visible yield uniform obedience to the inner invisible forces that were in the beginning projected into the material world. And these forces are so related, according to the present teaching of science that they seem to be only different manifestations of one force. Thus, as we approach the causes of the phenomena of every-day life and of the laboratory the light of science grows more luminous—sometimes astounding even the scientist, as in the discovery of the cathode rays—until we reach the borderland of uncreated power and wisdom, when the limited rays of the lamp of science become instantly extinguished and we can see no further. The world by wisdom knows not God, and the world can never discover through science the Power behind and above the forces that control matter. To look into that sacred realm, closed to science, we must turn on the light of the Written Revelation of God, "to which we will do well

to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts." The more we search and study this Revelation the more intensely will its blessed light shine to the praise of the Creator, and in the illumination of the created.

"The starry firmament on high
And all the glories of the sky
Yet shine not to Thy praise, O Lord,
So brightly as Thy Written Word.
The hopes that Holy Word supplies,
Its truths divine and precepts wise,
In each a heavenly beam I see,
And every beam conducts to Thee."

In God's words, written in the Bible are spirit and life. They have in them the power of growth and evolution. We never seem able to exhaust the fullness of their meaning. Like perennial fountains they are inexhaustible. We may satisfy our mental and spiritual thirst again and again, and yet at every re-reading find renewed freshness and fullness of Divine thought and love. Men will never outgrow the teaching of the Bible. Its words are luminous with spirit and life; and hence there is ever more and more light flashing forth from its inspired utterances, as the ages unfold and men grow in capacity to receive it. The fires in the gem, the flash in the dew-drop, and the seven-fold beauty of the rainbow change not in luster from age to age, but the Light that shines in the words that were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, grows brighter proportional to

our growth in the grace of God and in the knowledge of the truth.

Through the words of the Written Revelation shines the Light of the Lord, revealing glory above the heavens, glory before the world was, and glory to be manifested in the eternal future. It reveals also a glorious Kingdom in this world of ours, but not of this world—a kingdom that comes not with observation—a kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy, established “without hands” in the hearts of its subjects, and destined to “stand forever.” All who become subjects of this Kingdom become also children of light and angels of light minister unseen to their spiritual needs.

Language used in considering “the things that are not seen” must of necessity be largely figurative. Only when thus clothed can they be presented to the mind. So in the Bible we find oft-recurring figures of speech referring to the pure, abstract element Light. “The root of this instructive and remarkable imagery is in the sublime chapter that opens the Revelation of God. There Light is the medium through which the glory of God is revealed in the work of creation. In a forming world it is a form-giving element. According to the Hebrew Scriptures, this element is in Nature what it was in the Temple—the Shekinah of the Divine Presence. It is the mantle of the Diety. The Almighty challenges men to pierce through its mystery. Thus inspiration, giving to the Hebrews of old all, and more than

all, the fullness of the modern thought of one force in Nature, made this inscrutable and universal element the very breath of the presence of Him in whom all things live, and move, and have their being. This mysterious element is thus made the symbol of the Creating Word of God, who, incarnate in the form of man, is the Brightness of the Father's Glory. That which is revealed of the presence and work of this element in the material creation makes it the most fitting image of Christ the Lord in the spiritual creation. When it is said in the New Testament, 'In Him was Life and the Life was Light of men,' that statement is made in a revelation which commences in the very words that begin the Old Testament, and which throughout pointedly refers to the record of the Creation and borrows this figure from it." All the language of the New Testament, referring to light, is conformed to this image, and is the recurrence of very similar language in the Old Testament. "In the Bible voice answers to voice though ages intervene." St. John reveals the truth that God is Light. David had a thousand years before chanted, "The Lord is my Light." Does St. John speak of walking in the light as God is in the light? Isaiah cried, "Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord." Does St. James speak of God as the Father of lights? Of old it was written, "God said, Let there be light." Does St. Paul declare "God dwelleth in light unapproachable? In one of the psalms of ancient Israel is this utterance, "O Lord, Thou coverest

Thyself with Light as with a garment." Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world." Of old it was said of Him, "I will set Thee for a light to the Gentiles; the people that sat in darkness saw a great Light; the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting Light."

While our Lord went about on the earth doing good, the Light that was in Him shone out in His words and works, in His pure and spotless life, and in the beauty and inspiration of His presence. "Never man spake like this Man"—never man lived and loved, and wrought like this Man. Yet He came unto His own and His own received Him not. The Light of the world was in the world, but the world knew *It* not. Men would not, could not see the Light that was in Him because they loved darkness rather than light, and the god of this world had blinded their eyes. Their wills were their own and they would not choose to make them God's will. They had power, and they used it to do as they willed. God never forces the will. Even while Jesus moved among men He was always mindful of the freedom of the will. He would not by overpowering evidence force men to believe on Him. When from His inner life was going forth power, controlling the forces of Nature, healing the sick and raising the dead, He appeared to the eye as only a man among men.

Only once, while in the flesh, did the hidden Light burst forth in overwhelming splendor, and three alone of His nearest disciples were found sufficiently spiritual to witness the manifesta-

tions of His glory. When the time drew near for this effluence of the Light that was in Him, Jesus took Peter and James and John and led them up into a high mountain apart by themselves, above the din of earth's traffic and babble, and nearer to the Heavens, to pray. And as He prayed He was transfigured before them, and His face did shine as the sun, even His raiment becoming radiant and exceeding white as the light.

Faith is the evidence of things not seen, but on holy Mount Herman the glory in Jesus, which had only been seen by the eye of faith, was openly manifested to Peter, James and John, who beheld for the human race this appearing of our Lord in "the excellent glory," and heard the voice out of the cloud saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." For us this glorious appearing of our Lord, during His human life, is the symbol, the shadow of the Glory which He has with the Father in the High and Holy Place of the universe, and in which He will appear at His final coming "with the holy angels" when every eye shall behold Him.

"The holy angels," ministers and messengers of the King invisible, more rapid probably in their transit from place to place than light itself, ever manifest a lively interest in the welfare of humanity. They earnestly desire to look into the evolution of the Divine Government of men, and become willing agents in ministering to the spiritual needs and joys of the children

of Light. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" The number of these messengers in the Kingdom of Light is incalculable. "We are come unto an innumerable company of angels." St. John saw vast numbers of angels, on a great occasion, round about the throne of God, "and the number of them," he says, "was ten thousand times ten thousand"—a hundred millions—and then, as if oppressed with the idea of the vast number, he simply adds, "and thousands of thousands," which may stand for many hundreds of millions. They move unseen in the atmosphere of our world, ministering to the heirs of the Eternal Inheritance, and they also move in the glorious Light of Heaven, beholding the face of the King of Glory. When to the shepherds abiding in the field near Bethlehem, keeping watch over their flocks by night, the Angel of the Lord appeared, the Glory of the Lord shone around them, and suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God in the Light of the Glory that revealed them to the shepherds.

"The light is sweet." There is nothing hidden from its sweet influence. As in the forming world light was the form-giving element, so in the producing world it is the tone-giving power. Light ministers pleasure to the senses and joy to the heart. It stores up sweetness in the fruits of the earth, diffuses health through the air we breathe, and pours refreshing taste into the cup of cold water. Light paints with roseate

hues the morning clouds and gilds with many a golden tint the evening sky; covers the fields with "enameled green" and the forests with emerald and gold, touches the flowers with manifold hues and breathes into them sweet perfumes. "Truly the light is sweet and a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun." Therein we live, and move and work; acquire knowledge and wisdom, and obtain joy and gladness.

In all its beauty and glory, however, the sweet light of Nature is but the shaded reflection of the glorious Light that illuminates the unseen world, and all light is the modified outshining of the Light of the Eternal Word, in whom all things were made and by whom the universe was illuminated.

The prophecies of the Old Testament, concerning the Anointed One who was to come, all converge toward the thought of One who was to come as a Light into the world. "Far off His coming shone." "Thy sun," said one of the prophets, "shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thy everlasting Light." And when the last Old Testament prophet was born into the world, his father Zacharias, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied of him, saying:

"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the
Most High;
For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make
ready His ways;
To give knowledge of salvation to His people,
In the remission of their sins,
Because of the tender mercies of our God,

Wherein the Day-spring from on high shall visit us
To shine upon them that sit in darkness and in the
shadow of death,
To guide our feet into the way of peace."

When Mary, the Blessed Virgin, brought forth her first-born Son the Light of the Glory of the Lord shone about the shepherds, to whom the Angel announced His birth, and the Light of His Star guided the Magi to His cradle. During the presentation of the young Child in the Temple, good old Simeon, to whom it had been revealed that he should not see death till he had seen the Lord's Anointed, took the Holy Child in his arms, blessed God and said:

"Now lettest Thou thy servant depart, O Lord,
According to Thy word, in peace,
For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples,
A Light for the unveiling of the Gentiles,
And the glory of Thy people Israel."

A hundred years after these events the Beloved disciple said of his blessed Lord and Master, who came into the world a helpless babe and moved among men in fashion as a man, "There was the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

"Christ is the Light and the only Source of true light, and each human being must have either a mind blinded by the god of this world, bringing darkness and death, or Jesus Christ, His Light and Eternal Life."

As the sunlight may become obscure by intervening clouds or veiled by the shades of night,

so the light of life may become clouded by sin or darkened by transgression until the eyes of the heart see not and the darkness of spiritual night overshadows the soul. St. Paul, comparing the glory of the law and the glory of the gospel, and referring to the veil over the face of Moses, which prevented the children of Israel from looking steadfastly upon that which was to pass away, says, "Their minds were blinded, and unto this day remaineth the same veil upon their heart untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament. But this veil," he further says, "is taken away in Christ." The heart that turns to the Lord turns toward the true Light, and the veil of sin is removed, so that in reading the Scriptures its words become luminous and reveal grace and truth to the unveiled heart. The veil, however, may rest upon the heart in reading the New Testament as well as the Old. "But if the gospel be veiled it is veiled to them that are perishing; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

St. Paul then, between the lines, indicates that the light of the gospel is not one of the lights of this world, that while it shines through earthly mediums its source is God. "For we preach not ourselves," he goes on to say, "but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. Because God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our

hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us."

As the Kingdom of Christ is in the world, but not of the world, so the Light of His glorious Gospel shines, not upon the outer earthen vessels—not upon the tabernacles of clay in which we sojourn, but in our hearts, in the sanctuary of the spirit. The Divine Light in the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle was the symbol of the Light that illumines every life that is set apart for the service of God. The tabernacle of flesh and blood may look rough and uncouth, weather-beaten and time-worn, while within is shining the sweet, life-giving, hope-inspiring Light of the Lord. Nor can the storms that beat upon the tabernacle, nor death that will finally take it down, either overshadow or extinguish the light that shines within; "for if this earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," in which the light of life continues to shine on forever.

During our pilgrimage on the earth we have this treasure, the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, in earthen vessels, in physically wrought bodies, that limit the free action of the spirit; yet, "the body is for the Lord," and we are required in obedience to "the law of the Spirit of life" to "glorify God in the body;" for when, through the grace of God, we "turn from

darkness to light," and "show forth the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light," these bodies, though still earthy, become temples of the Holy Spirit. These earthen vessels are thus consecrated to holy service, and while we strive earnestly and faithfully in well-doing we "shine as lights in the world." The indwelling light, however, does not change these material bodies. They remain fleshly and mortal, though sometimes becoming more beautiful, for through them the inner light shines out in an upright walk and a chaste conversation, in love and good works; "for the fruit of the Light is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth."

God our Father wants His children to be partakers of His holiness, to be sharers in His blessedness. "Therefore, He saith, awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine upon thee." As God dwells in the Light so He would have us dwell in the Light, and "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." "Eye hath not seen," said the prophet, "nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." "But God," says St. Paul, "hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." It is our privilege to live in the Light of the Holy Spirit, the Revealer and Comforter. St. Paul says to the saints in Ephesus, "Ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light, proving what is well pleasing to the Lord."

With this accords the language of St. John; "If we say that we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He is in the Light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

For those who are thus made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in Light, "to die is gain." To them the even-tide of life shall be light, and with peace and joy they shall pass over the line between the seen and the unseen worlds into "the place prepared for them" by the Lord; where "there is no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine upon it, for the Glory of God illuminates it, and the Light thereof is the Lamb."

LOVE

God is love, and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him.

—1 John 4:16.

This is Love, that we should walk after His Commandments.

—2 John, verse 6.

Thou hidden Love of God whose height,
Whose depth unfathomed no man knows!
I see from far thy beauteous light,
Inly I sigh for thy repose;
My heart is pained, nor can it be
At rest till it finds rest in thee.

—Tersteegen.

Love proves its spiritual origin by rising above time and space and circumstances, wealth and age, and even temporary beauty, at the same time that it alone can perfectly use all these material adjuncts. Being spiritual, it is the lord of matter and can give and receive from it glory and beauty when it will, and yet live without it.

—Charles Kingsley.

VIII

LOVE

The four cardinal virtues of the ancients were Temperance, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude. To these Christianity added three—Faith, Hope, Love. Of these seven the greatest is Love.

Love has always been placed in the category of the virtues. A careful study of the subject, however, raises in the mind a very strong doubt concerning the correctness of this classification. Is Love, like the virtues, merely a moral quality or property, or is it something more substantial? Is it not an essence—a spiritual substance that underlies and gives character and tone to the virtues?

Two things, Life and Light, are naturally associated in the mind with Love. Life has always been considered by scientists and philosophers, inclined toward materialism, as a quality or property of matter, and by those who lean toward vitalism, as an energy or force, called therefore the "vital force." There are some philosophers, however, who consider Life a substance. This view accords with the teaching of the Bible. Light also is coming to be regarded, not as a mode of motion, according to the wave theory, but as a force or substance, according to the Electro-magnetic theory, manifesting power in various ways, dependent on given conditions. This view also agrees with

the teaching of the Written Revelation. Love also, in its ultimate analysis, will be found to be an energing substance.

It is not said of God in His Holy Word that He is temperance, or prudence, or justice, or fortitude; or that He is faith, or hope; but it is affirmed of Him that He is Life, that He is Light, that He is Love. Now God is not constituted of qualities or properties. He is Substance—the self-existent Substance—the Substance of substances—the Creator and Upholder of all things, in whom all things stand together and move in harmony; and since Life, Light and Love are elements in the Being of Deity, they must be substances—not qualities or properties of a substance, nor modes of an energy or force. They have qualities and powers of their own.

In the conversation at Jacob's well with the woman of Samaria, concerning the place and mode of worshiping the Father, Jesus revealed to her that God is Spirit, and that they who worship Him acceptably, must worship in spirit and truth. God is the Eternal Spiritual Substance, who was before all things that exist in time and space, who supports and orders all things, who is in and through all things, visible and invisible, spiritual and material. Now if with this statement of our Lord we associate those final revelations, made through the beloved disciple, that God is Life, Light, Love, our ideas of the nature of God will become illumined and enlarged. God will be in our thought and love, not only the incomprehensible, infinite

Power of the universe, but also the living, shining, loving Personal Father whose Name is redolent with loving service and worship.

Life, Light and Love seem also to be essential elements of our being. Take away any one of them and you deprive us of something that, in some way, affects our identity. Take away life and the body is left a corpse; "If the light that is in thee become darkness," said Jesus, "how great is that darkness;" and if love die out of the soul, the individual becomes a fiend. These facts point to the Divine likeness in our constitution. God made man in His own image—breathed unto him the breath of Life, illumined his spirit by placing therein a Light from the "Eternal Beam," and completed the image by uniting with Life and Light His everlasting Love. Composed thus of these three Divine elements, the image of God in man was crowned with the qualities of righteousness and true holiness.

Thorough scientific investigation will, on these questions as it has on others, finally reach an agreement with the Sacred Scriptures. On whatever subject, therefore, the conclusions of science and the plain teaching of the Bible seem to differ, it is wiser to accept the instruction of the Written Revelation and wait till science, in her interpretation of the Revelation made in Nature, arrives at the advanced position held by the Word of God; for, as James D. Dana says, "There can be no real conflict between the two Books of the Great Author. Both are

Revelations made by Him to man—the *earlier* telling of God-made harmonies, coming up from the deep past and rising to their height when man appeared; the *latter* teaching man's relation to his Maker and speaking of loftier harmonies in the eternal future."

There is no subject in the Bible probably, so thoroughly analyzed and so elaborately treated as that of Love. In the first epistle to the Corinthians, twelfth chapter, St. Paul, after speaking of various spiritual gifts and exhorting the brethren to desire earnestly the greater gifts, declares, "a still more excellent way show I unto you," and then proceeds in that wonderful thirteenth chapter to make an estimate of love by comparing it with the greatest gifts and the greatest self-sacrifices known among men; after which he makes an analysis of love, and closes by showing its unfailing and abiding character.

St. Paul does not, in pointing out the more excellent way, even mention the gifts considered great among men. He only notices those that have always been held in the highest esteem. "If I speak," he declares, "with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not Love, I am become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." Eloquence, apart from love, is here classed by the apostle among mere sounds. Continuing the comparison, he says: "And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." John Wesley used to say, "An ounce of

Love is worth a pound of knowledge." When in Sir Walter Scott's presence some one spoke of literary talents and accomplishments as if they were above all things to be esteemed and honored, he exclaimed: "God help us! What a poor world this would be if that were the true doctrine! I have read books enough, and observed and conversed with many eminent and splendidly cultured minds in my time, but I assure you that I have heard higher sentiments from the lips of poor uneducated men and women, when exerting the spirit of severe yet gentle heroism under difficulties and afflictions, or speaking their simple thoughts as to circumstances in the lot of friends and neighbors, than I ever met with, out of the Bible. We shall never learn to feel and respect our real calling and destiny unless we have taught ourselves to consider everything as moonshine compared with the education of the heart." Heart culture, or education in the school of Love is here rightly placed before intellectual training, and the latter without the former is justly considered a cold, pale light. "Knowledge puffeth up," says St. Paul, "but Love buildeth up." Finally the emptiness of good works and self-sacrifice, apart from Love, is declared by the great apostle. "If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor," he affirms, "and if I give my body to be burned, but have not Love, it profiteth me nothing." According to Paul, he who speaks with the tongue of eloquence, but is not moved by Love, is only a cold, sounding instrument; he who possesses

the gifts of prophecy and faith, and understands all mysteries and all knowledge, but feels not the mellowing power of Love, is nothing; and he who bestows all his goods in charity, and exhausts even his life in self-sacrifice, but is not actuated by love, is nothing profited. Love is an essential part of God's Being and moves His heart in the execution of all His works, and so essential is it in the human soul that without it our most highly esteemed works are merely like the action of cold machinery. There is no spiritual value in them. There can be no spiritual worth without love. Love is the great thing—the essential thing—the “one thing needful.”

Having placed love in the supreme position among the most highly esteemed and honored things of this world, Paul proceeds to make an analysis of his subject: “Love suffereth long; is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not its own; is not provoked; taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth.” In this analysis we find nine of the virtues: Patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, right-mindedness or sincerity. That which gives merit to these qualities and makes them virtues is Love, existing, or acting under differing conditions.

Patience is love passive, love waiting.

Kindness is love active, love doing good.

Generosity is love rejoicing in the welfare of others, and helping them on their way.

Humility is love veiling her face.

Courtesy is love behaving with grace and beauty.

Unselfishness is love forgetting herself while doing for others.

Good-temper or forbearance, is love making the temper sweet, love keeping the temper under control.

Guilelessness or innocence is love without suspicion, love putting the best construction on the conduct of others.

Right-mindedness, or sincerity, is love rejoicing in righteousness and with the truth as against falsehood.

When this synthesis of the virtues, in which also belong all other virtues, is examined, it will not seem very wonderful that "love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and we shall be able to understand more clearly that deep utterance of the apostle: "Love is the fulfilling of the law." This statement is beautifully illustrated in the following picture of love in the ten commandments:

"Supreme love to God can have no other gods.

Love resents every effort to represent its object as bird,
or beast or serpent.

Love never dishonors God's name by taking it in vain.

Love moves us to reverence the Lord's day.

Love makes home happy.

Love can never kill.

Lust, not love, breaks the seventh commandment.

Love prevents lying lips, love stops the voice of slander.
Love will give but never steal.
Love has no covetous eye for its neighbor's possessions."

"Love one another, even as I have loved you," was the new commandment of Jesus. "Christianity lays down no code of detailed precepts; it rather seeks to imbue the minds of its disciples with one great principle of Love, which, if fully and clearly apprehended, must embrace in itself all precepts. It abolishes the law of ordinances contained in commandments; but it abolishes them as the one blaze of sunshine abolishes the many lights of the solar system; it takes up the separate rules into the one law of Love."

Love rejoices in doing good, and "worketh no ill to its neighbor." Conformity to law is no restraint upon love, for it is rendered with voluntary and joyous obedience in the use of all the virtues that the law demands. The obedience of love is spontaneous, because love is the substance of which every virtue that the law requires is a quality. We find here also an explanation of another of Paul's profound utterances: "Love is the bond of perfection." It is that in which all the virtues, as qualities, inhere; the girdle that holds them together; the seal that gives them their value; and since the virtues make perfection and love is the bond that holds them together, "Love is the bond of perfection."

St. Paul, after stating some of its qualities, gives his reason for selecting love as the su-

preme possession, the highest good. It is a very simple, yet very wonderful reason; Love endures, unchanged in a world of changes and transitory values. "Love," Paul urges, "never faileth." Then he reviews from another position his list of the great things of his time, which men thought were going to last, and shows that they are all temporary. The things that are highly esteemed among men are in a state of perpetual change and shall finally pass away. Prophecies have already largely passed away, and those not yet fulfilled will be done away as the future history of the world becomes a record of the past. "Whether there be prophecies they shall fail." Languages have ceased to be spoken. Even the tongue in which Paul wrote is no longer a living language. The gift of tongues ended with the apostolic age. "Whether there be tongues they shall cease." Our forms of knowledge are passing away. Much that is reckoned valuable in one generation is pushed aside as worthless in the following age. "Whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away." We are only children in knowledge. We know in part, and that a small part, and our language is imperfect, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away, and we shall see clearly, and know fully, and speak perfectly. Through all these changes one thing endures unchanged. "Love never faileth," and when that which is perfect has taken the place of the imperfect, love will forever move heart and intellect in eternal activity.

There is in nature the inscrutable force, called by men the attraction of gravitation, by which all bodies and all particles of matter mutually tend toward each other. This marvelous power balances the mountains and holds the seas within their appointed bounds, keeps the countless worlds revolving in their orbits through the depths of space and maintains the equilibrium and harmony of the material universe. Similar is the power of love in the spiritual world. With "bands of love" the Creator draws His children to Himself and toward one another. Love is the attracting force that maintains harmony in the moral government of God. If "the love of the Spirit" ruled in human hearts the will of our Father who is in the heavens would be done in earth as it is in heaven, and righteousness, peace, and joy would reign among men. In heaven, where love reigns, there is no discord. The harmony and blessedness thereof flow on unbroken forever. Love controls every emotion, every impulse, every volition. Countless millions of the heavenly hosts unite their voices, without a discordant note, before the Throne of Him that liveth forever and ever, saying, "Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory, and the honor and the power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy Will they were and were created." Their love fills heaven with praise, and moral harmony, and spiritual beauty; and even extends down to the children of men. "There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

But what concerns us most is the evolution and practical use of love in our own lives. "Things that are no longer used become useless. A doctrine must rule the life. It should not take the position of an idle king, who does not govern; it must remain in force; it cannot be inoperative. In the world of the spirit one does not live upon the interest of former investments. There must be daily striving. We must pray, 'Give us this day our daily bread.'" We must wait on God and work and thrive; we must

"Think that day lost whose low, descending sun
Views from our hands no noble action done."

Running over again in our minds the qualities ascribed by Paul to love we find that they are every-day virtues. They can be practiced by every individual of every calling. They all relate to man, to the present life, to the known today, not to the unknown eternity. "We hear much of love to God; Christ spoke much of love to man. We make a great deal of peace with heaven; Christ made much of peace on earth." Love to God is our first duty. Love to man follows, and is evidence of our love to God. Religion is not a strange nor added something. It is the inspiration of the secular life, the breathing of the eternal spirit of love through this temporary world. John Wesley said: "Men talk much of happiness with God in heaven, but the idea of being happy with God on earth never enters their minds."

Let us look a little while at the practical work-

ing of love through each of the qualities ascribed to it by Paul.

Patience is Love passive, love resigned under affliction, or bereavement, or disappointment; biding its time; calm amid adverse conditions; waiting to do good as opportunity offers, ever wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Love confides in God, the almighty, all-loving, Father, and therefore waits.

Kindness is love active, love doing good, adding to the happiness and peace of others. Much of the life of Jesus was spent in doing kind things, in making people happy. He went about doing good. The quality of kindness is not strained. It blesses him that gives and him who receives. Our Heavenly Father is kind even to the unthankful. "Love, and live for others."

Generosity is love rejoicing in the welfare of others, and if need be, helping them on their way. Love is magnanimous. "This is love," says Henry Drummond, "in competition with others. Whenever you attempt a good work you will find other men doing the same kind of work, and probably doing it better. Envy them not. Envy is a feeling of ill-will toward those who are in the same line as ourselves, a spirit of covetousness and detraction. How little is even christian work a protection against un-christian feeling. The most despicable of all unworthy moods that cloud a Christian soul assuredly waits for us on the threshold of every work, unless we are fortified with the grace of magnanimity." "Love envieth not."

Humility is love veiling her face. Love does not seek to make a display of her beautiful work. Good deeds and kind words are kept from the public eye. Love seeks only the honor that comes from above; from Him who rewards in the light. "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."

Courtesy is Love behaving with grace and beauty. It is love in society, love in relation to etiquette. Courtesy is said to be love in little things, and politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Love does not neglect the little things that make up so much of life's assets. "Love doth not behave itself unseemly."

Unselfishness is Love forgetting herself while doing for others, giving up ease and comfort for her neighbor's welfare. "Love seeketh not her own." "Seekest thou great things for thyself?" asked the prophet, and then replied, "seek them not." Why not? Because there is no permanence in things, whether great or small. They cannot make character nor give peace. "Man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." It consists in loving and serving. The only true greatness is unselfish love.

Good-temper or Forbearance, is Love making the temper sweet, love keeping the temper under control. Love is not irritable. "Love is not provoked." "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his own spirit, than he that taketh a city." "He best keeps from anger," says Plato, "who remembers that God is always looking at him." Valpy says, "Learn

from Jesus to love and to forgive. Let the blood of Jesus, which implores pardon for you in heaven, obtain it from you for your brothers here upon earth."

Guilelessness, or Innocence, is Love without suspicion, love putting the best construction on the conduct of others. Love is without guile. Guilelessness is the opposite of suspicion. In the cloudy atmosphere of suspiciousness the soul shrivels, and the disposition becomes sour and fault-finding; in that of innocence, men grow larger, find encouragement, and attain confidence. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Even thinking evil of others reacts in producing narrowness and coldness of heart, and begets distrust. Thinking well of our fellow-men is a fountain of blessedness. "Love thinketh no evil."

Right-mindedness, or Sincerity, is Love rejoicing in righteousness and truth. We all know how common it is for people to listen to distorted reports about others and to take pleasure in unjust criticisms and deductions against those who are not held in esteem. Detracting words are eagerly caught up, and any injustice floating on the tide of common report brings its morsel of satisfaction. The sincere man takes no part in these unrighteous reports. Love does not rejoice in that which wrongs others, and refuses to make capital of their faults. There is in love that sincerity of purpose that tries to see things as they are, to learn the truth of the whole matter, and rejoices when they are found better than preju-

dice feared, or suspicion insinuated. "Love rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth."

"Love is the crowning grace of humanity," says Petrarch, "the holiest right of the soul, the golden link which binds us to duty and truth, the redeeming principle that chiefly reconciles the heart to life, and is prophetic of eternal good"

Having pointed out the leading qualities of love and given it the supreme place among the great things to be desired and sought, Paul closes with an exhortation compressed into three words: "*Follow after love.*" Eagerly desire, he seems to say, and earnestly strive to acquire love, as the chief good. Wealth, and power, and fame are not worthy of mention; eloquence and knowledge, and intellectual endowments are poor and cold without love. Desiring earnestly the greater gifts is commendable, but "following after love" is "a still more excellent way."

How can we find and keep love? How can we have this Divine essence interpenetrating and enthusing the soul, and moving mind and heart? A few of the virtues, the qualities of love, have been named, but these are only qualities. They do not constitute love; they only make virtue. Love is something more than the sum of all the virtues. It is a living, vitalizing essence, pervading the soul, bringing every faculty and every impulse into harmony with God, and into sympathy with all that is true, and good and beautiful. Now, how can we have this living, spiritualizing power come into the soul? Shall we

brace ourselves to secure it? Shall we try to copy the lives of those who have it? These efforts alone will never infuse love into our nature. Love comes as an effect. And only when we conform to the conditions can we secure the desired effect. Let us then endeavor to find the cause, so that we may know how to conform to the required conditions and secure the blessed effect. Christ's love begets love in our hearts. If we look to Him we must love. We cannot help it. Because He first loved us, the effect follows that we love. We love God and all that God loves. Our hearts are changed, mellowed. Love has its beginning in the new life. It comes from above. It is generated in our hearts by the power of Christ's love. "Contemplate the love of Christ and you will love. Stand before that mirror, reflect Christ's character and you will be changed into the same image from tenderness to tenderness. There is no other way. Look at the great sacrifice as He laid down Himself all through life and upon the Cross of Calvary; and you must love Him. And loving Him, you must become like Him. Love begets love." "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us."

To have the qualities of love fitted into the character is the great business of life—the only business whose profits will survive the wrecks of time. Knowledge and wealth puff up their possessors, but love builds up character, strengthening and beautifying it for eternity. To learn

love then is the supreme work to which we are called in this old world.

“For life with all it yields of joy or woe,
And hope and fear,
Is just our chance o’ the prize of learning love.”

Life is full of opportunities for learning and cultivating love. The poor—the poor in spirit as well as the poor in this world’s goods—are always with us. Those who need help and sympathy meet us all along life’s pathway. For intellect, and heart, and hand there is plenty of work. No man need live to himself, and no man can live for himself alone without wronging his own soul. The world is a schoolroom, not a playground; life is an education, not a holiday; and the great lesson for us to learn is how to love more ardently and practically. “Let us not love in word,” says St. John, “neither with the tongue, but in deed and truth.” Power to love, like other faculties, is developed and strengthened by practice. If one fails to use his muscles, he develops no strength in them; if he declines to exercise the mind, he evokes no mental force; and if he does not discipline his soul he acquires no vigor of soul fibre, no strength of moral character, no beauty of spiritual life. Love is not evoked simply by enthusiastic emotion. It is the rich, strong, kind, tender, glowing expression of the symmetrical Christian character—the Christ-like nature in its fullest development in human life. And the qualities of love that form this beautiful character can only be fitted into our lives and perfected by ceaseless practice.

Love produces confidence. Faith works through love. Confidence is the opposite of fear. Hence there is no fear in love. Perfect love casts out fear. He who fears is not made perfect in love. God is love. He who dwells in love, dwells in God and God in him. To love is to live. To love God is to live and confide in God; and since He is the God of truth, whose promises are yea and amen, whose power and wisdom are infinite, whose love never fails, he who is made perfect in love must enjoy perfect confidence and stand fast undisturbed by fear. He has the assurance that God is able and willing to do for him "exceeding abundantly above all that he can ask and think." His trust is in Jesus, the Christ, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and hence there is no cause for fear.

"And now abideth faith, hope, Love; these three, but the greatest of these is Love." "We will give ourselves to many things. Let us give ourselves first to Love. Hold things in their proportional value. Let at least the first great object of our lives be to achieve the character—and it is the character of Christ—which is built around Love." When we have achieved this character our lives will reflect the Beauty of God.

THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.

—John 3:16.

He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?

—Romans 8:32.

God's sovereignty is not in His right hand;
God's sovereignty is not in His intellect; God's
sovereignty is in His love.

—Henry Ward Beecher.

Of the systems above us, angelic and seraphic,
we know little; but we see one law, simple, efficient and comprehensive as that of gravitation—the law of Love—extending its sway over the whole of God's dominions, living where He lives, embracing every movement in its universal authority and producing the same harmony, where it is obeyed, as we observe in the movements of Nature.

—Mark Hopkins.

The law of Heaven is Love.

—Hosea Ballou.

IX

THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE

In the preceeding paper we briefly considered the nature and office of Love. We found that St. Paul gave the supreme place to Love, that he set it first among the greatest things of this world. Now, where shall we look for the supremacy of Love? Shall we find it anywhere or anywhen in this old world?

"Love's holy flame forever burneth;
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth;
Too oft on earth a troubled guest;
Sometimes deceived, sometimes oppressed,
It hath in heaven its perfect rest.
It soweth here in toil and care,
The harvest time of love is there."

The time has not yet come among the nations and the clans of the earth, nor even among individuals, in which might has ceased to make right. The old cry of "man's inhumanity to man" still echoes along the corridors of the ages, and the complaint of oppression and injustice is still heard above the turmoil of business and the din of the workshop. In this desert of social indifference, oppression, and hatred there are, however, many cheering and refreshing oases where Love reigns and sweetly dispenses her blessings.

Apparently also there is a malevolent influence in Nature; for though the worlds above and

around us move in unbroken harmony, the earth exhibits many phenomena that seem not to come under the supremacy of love. The sun shines, it is true, on the evil and the good, and the rain falls upon the just and the unjust, but the pestilence also walketh in darkness and the destruction wasteth at noonday. Our world is not what it ought to be—not what it was designed and created to be. “An enemy hath done this”—hath sowed the seeds of evil and sin.

To study the Supremacy of Love we must open the Bible and learn what the Sacred Scriptures teach, for they alone reveal God’s love. In the things which are made we find lessons on infinite power and infinite wisdom, but only in the Written Word do we find the unfolding of infinite Love.

Taking a wide view of our subject, we include in it the revealed facts that Love is the ruling power in the Heart of God, and that His beneficent law requires the Supremacy of Love in the hearts of men. Bearing in mind these two lines of thought, let us seek to learn, in the first place, what the Bible teaches on the Supremacy of Love among men, and then, in the second place, what it reveals concerning the Supremacy of Love in God.

What does the Bible teach relative to the ruling power of love in our hearts and lives? On the plains of Moab, near the sacred Jordan, Moses, in the Name of the Lord, called unto all Israel and said unto them: “Hear, O Israel; Jehovah is our God, Jehovah is One; and thou shalt love

Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;" and to this was added elsewhere: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." These laws, in the creation of man, were engraved by the finger of God upon the sensitive tablet of his heart, and therefore they are natural laws, but being sadly defaced by sin, they need re-inforcement through indirect enactment in human language. On these two commandments, taught Jesus, hang all the law and the prophets. Here we have the ground-work, the essential principle of all moral and spiritual law—supreme love to God, and love to our neighbor equal to, and in some exigencies even greater than, that which we have for ourselves.

Jesus let His Light shine through these commandments, as He did through others, and thus revealed their true spirit, lifted them out of the rubbish that selfishness and hypocrisy had heaped around them, and set them in their own beautiful light. "A new commandment give I unto you," said Jesus to His disciples, "that ye love one another." Why new? Was not "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" as old as the Mosaic Code? Was it not written by the loving hand of the Creator on the tablet of the first human heart? Jesus made a new promulgation of the law of love with a deeper significance. He not only breathed into the commandment a new spirit, but also gave it a new form—"Love one another"—and this form was used by the apostles. St. Paul says, "ye are taught of God to love one another," and St. Peter, who doubtless knew

the spirit and import of the new commandment, exhorts the brethren to "love one another from the heart fervently." The new commandment requires a glowing love. And according to St. James, the Lord's brother, it must "not have respect to persons." It must glow in the heart toward the poor as well as the rich, the lowly, as well as the exalted, the ignorant as well as the wise.

Jesus also made obedience to this new commandment the badge of discipleship. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This royal law was so loyally obeyed during the primitive years of Christianity, and the hearts of the disciples were so warmly "knit together in love," that among their enemies it was a matter of common remark: "See how these Christians love."

Jesus also erects a higher standard of love than that of the Mosaic Code. The old commandment said: "As thyself, thou shalt love thy neighbor." Jesus, in the new commandment says: "Even as I have loved you, ye also shall love one another." Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, but so great was the love of Jesus that he laid down his life for the whole world—many enemies and few friends. St. Paul holds up this standard to the Ephesians: "Walk in love," he says, "even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for you, an offering and a sacrifice to God." The Lord has here given us the supreme standard of love.

We come now to learn what the Bible teaches concerning the Supremacy of love in God. "God is love," teaches the Beloved disciple. God is the Fountain of life; God is the Center of light; God is the Source of love. When our hearts are aglow with the love of God then our eyes open to see everywhere, written in letters of light upon the things that are made, the evidences of our Heavenly Father's care and tender regard for His children. It was of the unfathomed depth of God's love that a maniac with intellect clear on his theme wrote with charcoal on the wall of his cell:

"Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry,
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky."

Love is the motive power in the heart of God in the work of Creation, in the work of Preservation, and in the work of Redemption.

The four and twenty elders cast down their crowns before the Throne of Him that liveth for ever and ever, saying: "Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory, and the honor, and the power, for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy Will they were and were created." Answering to this voice of later Scripture there is another from the Old Scriptures: "Blessed be Thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou art

the *Lord*, even Thou alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth and all things that are thereon; the seas and all that is in them; and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshipeth Thee." Let us join with these two a third voice from the Bible: "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." These texts voice the concurrent teaching of all the books and letters of the Bible.

The evils with which our world is disturbed seem, however, to contradict the teaching of God's Written Revelation. But the contradiction is only a seeming one, and a little careful study of what God has revealed in the Bible will harmonize the apparent discord between His works and His Written Word.

When the work of Creation was completed, at the close of the sixth great day, "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." From this judgment and testimony of the Creator, who is the God of truth, we learn that the world as it came from His forming hand was not only "good" but "very good." And this was the quality that was ascribed to every thing that was made, visible and invisible, without exception.

After this glorious consummation of the Creative Work, an enemy to God and man sowed the seeds of sin that brought forth and is still bringing forth the evils from which the whole world suffers. Through temptation from this arch-enemy of the human race came "man's first diso-

bedience and the mortal taste of the forbidden fruit" which brought death into the human family and "all our woe." Out of that disobedience have come "thorns and thistles, toil and sorrow," disease and death, and the destructive results that often attend the perverted, violent action of the forces of nature.

Man was made to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping (prowling) thing that creepeth upon the earth." Now in this original grant was doubtless included dominion over the forces or powers of nature, for it extended "over all the earth." And these forces were designed to be so perfectly under man's control that no accident would have been possible. Heat, light, and electricity would have been under his complete dominion and skill, and would have served him without any possibility of accident. He who stands above the forces that propel the sweeping hurricane, and whirl the destructive cyclone, would have so tempered the winds that they would have been gentle zephyrs, and would have brought only health and refreshing showers. Eden, as the human family, increased, and their needs enlarged, would have become extended over the earth, and the whole world, in due time, would have become a paradise. This Divine-given power and blessedness man largely lost through disobedience and consequent degeneration; and now it is only as he rises in knowledge and righteousness by obedience to the Divine

laws, written in his nature and enforced by the Revealed Word of God, that he is regaining the dominion over the earth that was his originally by direct grant of the Creator.

Wars among animals, in our geological age of the earth, as well as wars among men, are the effects of the mortal taste of the forbidden fruit. They are all the fruits of man's violation of law—the outcome of perverted free-agency.

The prophet Isaiah describes a time, in the future, of great peace and righteousness, when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This prophecy doubtless embodies a spiritual element, referring to the mediatorial reign of the Prince of Peace. It seems also to describe a time in the distant future when peace and love shall reign, not only among men, but also among the lower orders of the living world.

This prophetic description is also a picture of the original state of man and his inferior companions; for it is written: "The Lord God brought every beast of the field and every fowl of the

air to the man to see what he would call them. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field." Quietly they came to the man and they "did not hurt nor destroy" in all that holy place. No prowling beasts nor birds of prey disturbed the peace of their helpless neighbors. All subsisted upon the supplies of the vegetable world, according to the grant of their Creator given to the man in the form following: "Behold I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which there is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat: and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat." This golden age, after the change wrought in man by his alienation from his Maker and Lord, passed away. Flesh was eventually granted for food, and fear and dread supplanted love and confidence in the animal world. The changed state of man's nature wrought deleterious changes in his external conditions, affecting the harmony and well-being of the whole world, and causing through all the cycles of history the disharmony so forcibly described by St. Paul: "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the

glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now. And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Sir William Dawson, after stating that "materialistic evolution must ever and necessarily fail to account for the higher nature of man, and also for his moral aberrations," and that "these only come rationally into the system of nature under the supposition of a Higher Intelligence, from whom man emanates and whose nature he shares," says, "Christianity is in this respect not so much a revelation of the Supernatural as the highest bond of the great unity of nature. It reveals to us the Perfect Man who is also one with God, and the mission of this Divine Man to restore the harmonies of God and humanity, and consequently of man with his natural environment in this world, and with his spiritual environment in the higher world of the future. If it is true that nature now groans because of man's depravity and that man himself shares in the evils of this disharmony with nature around him, it is clear that if man could be restored to his true place in nature he would be restored to happiness and to harmony with God; and if, on the other hand, he can be restored to harmony with God he will then also be restored to harmony with his natural environment, and so to life, and happiness and immortality.

"It is here that the old story of Eden, and the teaching of Christ, and the prophecy of the New Jerusalem strike the same note, which all material nature gives forth when we interrogate it respecting its relations to man."

From the mortal taste of the fruit of the forbidden tree came also the diseases and the infirmities from which we suffer.

We and our fathers, in a line all the way back to Adam, have sinned and brought evil upon ourselves. We have abused the Divine gift of free-agency, and in consequence of that abuse we suffer. We reap what we sow. If we sow "wild oats" we shall reap "wild oats," and if "we sow to the wind we shall reap the whirlwind." If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we sow to the spirit we shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.

God never violates the rights of the free-agent. He places before His wayward children inducements to do right. He persuades, He pleads, He woos, but He never drives. He follows His wandering, disobedient children with pleadings most tender, and with promises great and precious. Unto men He calls and His voice is to the sons of men. That warning, pleading, reassuring voice is heard in every disobedient heart, tenderly saying, when translated into human speech: "My son, do thyself no harm. Give Me thy heart, and I will keep thee in perfect peace amid the adverse conditions that sin has placed around thee. Cast thy burden upon Me and thou shalt find soul rest.

Walk in My ways, and thou shalt find life and dwell in My love."

In one view of the case before us, we bring evil upon ourselves; in another view, God visits us with evil, but only as the natural outcome, or penalty, of violated law, and He causes the evils, under which we labor and suffer, to work together for good, when we return to Him, and become His obedient children. He so tempers them that in our patient endurance of them, we are made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," and our light affliction which, compared with eternity, is but for a moment, is made to "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen." "God chastises in love for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness."

"For though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies;
For He doth not afflict willingly [from His heart—
Hebrew], nor grieve the children of men."

Sometimes amid the ills of life we become impatient, and instead of bearing joyfully our sufferings, we complain, like Israel of old, that the Lord hath forsaken us, while the truth is we have forsaken the Lord: "But Zion said, Jehovah hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, these may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee

upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Here God's love for His rebellious children is declared to be above that of a mother for her babe; for though severe pressure may cause mother-love, the strongest in the human heart, to weaken, so that she may cease to have compassion on her child; God's love never fails, and His heart ever rejoices over His children to do them good. He engraves, not merely their names, but themselves upon the palms of His hands, and so condescending is His love that it reaches down and enfolds the lowliest and humblest of earth. "For thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the High and Holy Place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "May the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us."

If in the Creation and Preservation of the world, the power that moves the Arm of God is Love, how great must that Love be when it moves His Heart in the Work of Redemption!

The unfolding of the Work of Redemption manifests the Love of God in His long-suffering and forbearance, in His mercy and forgiveness, and in His readiness to enter into self-renunciation and self-sacrifice to save the world. Had there been coldness or indifference in the Heart of the Eternal Father man would have been left to perish in his trespass and sin. But "so wonderfully kind is the Heart of the Eternal," that

even "in the days of Eternity," before the heavens were "meted out," or the earth "was formed," the arduous Work of Salvation from sin and its direful effects, was planned, and when, "man's first disobedience" became a fact, went into effective operation.

How little we think of the magnitude, of the Self-sacrifice, of the Priceless Cost of the Work of Redemption! In the Work of Creating, God spoke and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast, but in the Work of Saving man from sin and death God is represented as putting forth effort, as laboring in order to accomplish the purpose of His Heart. God has put forth infinite labor, at infinite cost, with infinite Self-sacrifice that man might be saved from sin and lifted up out of the darkness of death into the light of life. He has done all that justice and love required, all that it was possible to do without infringing upon man's free-agency; and thus He places, in justice and love, upon every individual the responsibility of performing his part of the Work, to wit, compliance with God's terms of peace and the working out of his salvation while God works in him to will and to work.

So intimately related to the existence of sin is the Plan of Redemption that the prevalence of sin may be studied in the light of the Evolution of Redemption, and a reason more or less satisfactory may thus be found for the permission of evil in our world.

The origin and existence of evil have formed a perplexing and unsolvable problem among

thinking people in all the ages. The most perplexing phase of the question to the Christian mind is the permission of evil. Why did God permit sin to enter the world? Why did He not prevent so great a calamity? These are questions that we shall never be able, in this life at least, to solve. The answer is with the Creator. The secret is His, and He has kept it unrevealed, not from unwillingness to make it known, but on account of our inability to comprehend a subject so deep and so vast, even though explained to us in infinite wisdom. We are only children. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts. But whatever may be the Divine Purpose in allowing evil to enter the world, it must be granted that, according to the teaching of the Word of Revelation, it was permitted, not in malevolence—but in love; for God is Love, and love moved Him to create, and to uphold and govern.

In studying closely the Divine history of redemption a dim ray of light falls upon the unsolvable problem and enables us to see darkly why the Creator permitted a part of His work to be thus temporarily marred. The permission, it must be borne in mind, only allows a temporary existence of evil, and this permitted period of time is only an infinitesimal segment of the immeasurable circle of eternity. "The Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil"—the sin and the evils which

he, our adversary, has wrought in the world. In the death and resurrection of Christ the "prince of this world" is already judged and his time is short.

The universe, existing in space and time, was completed in the Mind of the Creator before He commenced the Work of creating. He knew that the tares of sin would be sown in the human heart, and making this apparent defeat of the Divine Purpose the occasion of a higher Revelation of Himself than could be made in the unfolding of Creative Power, He ordained in the "days of eternity" the merciful work of salvation—the deliverance of the world from sin and its attendant evils. Hence, in the Sacred Scriptures the Deliverer and Savior, who is Christ the Lord, is spoken of as the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and "who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." "God manifested in the flesh" is, therefore, a part of the plan of the universe. Sin is thus made the occasional cause of the highest of the Divine Revelations. No words uttered from heaven, and no work of creation, wrought by the Eternal Father, could, as far as we can see, so portray to His children "the breadth and length, and depth and height" of God's love as the Divine Manifestation in our Lord Jesus Christ. He unveiled the beauty and the love of the Father in a human life. His mission, when He so humbled Himself as to dwell as a man on the earth, was not only to save us from our sins and to give us the light of life, but also

to declare the "depth of the wisdom of God" and the extent of the love of God, to our world and to all worlds—to the Principalities, and Powers in heavenly places; and hence, when He came a helpless babe in little Bethlehem, "all the angels of God were commanded to worship Him."

These holy messengers of the King Eternal, earnestly desiring to look into these things as they unfold to them His love and glory, fulfill with joy and grace their ministry, and worship with songs of praise or with covered face. They ministered to the Father's only begotten Son during His life on earth, announcing His advent, visiting Him while He was in the world, and accompanying Him in His exit out of the world. Angels guided the movements of Jesus in infancy, ministered to Him during His temptations in the wilderness, sustained Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, guarded His tomb and rolled aside the great stone door when He arose from the dead. A cloud of angels accompanied Him in His ascension far above all heavens and hundreds of millions of angels, assembled from all parts of the universe, were circled around the Eternal Throne to welcome Him on His return to receive the Glory which He had with the Father before the world was; and they all united in "saying with a loud voice: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Compared with the reception given to Jesus

when He resumed His seat on the Throne erected in the High and Holy Place of the universe, the Columbian Exposition becomes a mere child's show, and the thrones and dominions of earth but glittering bubbles on the sea of time.

From the brief consideration that we have now made of the Work of Redemption, it seems probable that the manifestation of the Eternal Father through our Lord Jesus Christ is the clearest, highest, fullest revelation of His goodness and love that it is possible to make. We have no reason to suppose that there ever has been in the past, or that there ever will be in the future, a similar or higher unfolding of the Nature of Deity. "It stands amid the lapse of ages and the waste of worlds a single and solitary monument," and proclaims to the wondering and adoring universe the wisdom, and the love, and the glory of the Creator, as thought expressed in words and as Creative Power transformed into worlds could not. Jesus will evermore stand before all worlds as the highest Expression of the Beauty and Love of the Eternal God.

"Without controversy, therefore, great is the mystery of Godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made, and in whom all things consist, through whom is made known the beauty, and the love, and the glory of God, is Lord of all and Savior of all. He illuminates all things and attracts all things. In this light how luminous becomes the declara-

tion of Jesus made a short time before He was lifted up on the Cross: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all unto Me"—all things, all men, all angels, all the principalities and powers in heavenly places.

THE VOICE OF GOD

Did ever people hear the Voice of God speaking
out of the midst of the cloud, as thou hast heard,
and live?

—Deuteronomy 4:33.

Ye yourselves have seen that I have talked with
you from heaven.

—Exodus 20:22.

The voice is the flower of beauty.

—Zeno.

How wonderful is the human voice! It is indeed the organ of the soul! The intellect of man sits enthroned visibly upon his forehead and in his eye; and the heart of man is written upon his countenance. But the soul reveals itself in the Voice only, as God revealed Himself to the prophets of old, in "the still, small voice," and in the voice from the burning bush. The soul of man is audible, not visible. A sound alone betrays the flowing of the Eternal Fountain, invisible to man.

—H. W. Longfellow.

The voice is not merely so much air, but air modulated and impregnated with life.

—Joubert.

X

THE VOICE OF GOD

It has been asserted in print, and even proclaimed from the pulpit that "God's voice has never been heard in this world." One reason assigned for this dogmatic assertion is the fact recognized in Physics that sound can only be produced in a material medium by a material agent. God is spirit, and since sound can only be produced by an agent that is material, and conveyed to the fleshly ear through a medium that is also material, the conclusion is that God, being spirit, cannot speak so as to be heard, in our material atmosphere, by mortal ears.

In the narrowness of our knowledge, and in the limited range of scientific investigation, this position may seem tenable, but it must be remembered that "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts." We know nothing of the methods and instruments of communication between beings purely spiritual. We are only cognizant of the laws of sound in this little world. Shall we then limit the Limitless One to the narrow sphere of our knowledge? Shall finite minds define the limit of things possible to the Infinite Mind? Leaving out of consideration the various methods that the wise and good Creator may have of communing with His intelligent creatures, let

us fix our attention on one possible method of transmitting sound from spiritual lips, through a material medium, to non-spiritual ears. Who shall say that the Eternal Spirit cannot produce in our atmosphere the vibrations necessary to convey the sound of voice that He may wish to transmit to the human ear? He who made the air, can He not cause it to vibrate with sound? He who made the ear, can He not cause it to hear? An affirmative answer must be considered reasonable by the most skeptical. If God can cause in our air the waves of sound and transmit them to the material ear, the sensation of sound will be produced in the organs of hearing, telephoned by the auditory nerves to the centre of hearing, in the surface of the brain, perceived in the consciousness, and apprehended by the mind.

Having now briefly shown that it is possible for God to talk with men through audible tones, or voice, let us turn to the Bible and try to ascertain whether any Revelations made therein were given in audible words.

Revelations of the Divine Will have been made to men in various ways: "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son." We are at present concerned with but one of these methods.

By the self-styled "more advanced" it is held that when the great law-giver of Israel used the expression, "The Lord spake unto Moses," the

speaking was only an "impression" made in his mind which he regarded and spoke of, as the "Voice of God" speaking to him. Were this view true, there would be no more authority in the law given by Moses than in the statements of Socrates, who obeyed the voice of his inner monitor. If, however, we accept the writings contained in the Bible, as of Divine authority, "to be understood and received," as Daniel Webster affirms, "in the plain and obvious meaning of their statements," then the declarations found in them bearing on this subject are too explicit to be misconstrued or explained away. We propose to examine a few of them.

In the primitive years of the human race, when plain, simple instruction was needed, God was accustomed to appear to men in the form of man, and talk with them as a man talks with his friend. Even as late as the time of Abraham God appeared in human form to that patriarch, by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the door of his tent, in the heat of the day, and tarried and talked with Abraham probably several hours.

In the early history of the ancient nations their ideas of God, of creation and religion were pure, simple and correct. "Six thousand years ago," says Boscawen, "man in Egypt and Chaldea stands before us, pure in his tastes, lofty in his ideals, and above all keenly conscious of the relationship which existed between him and his God. It is no dread, but the grateful love of a child to its father, of friend to friend, that meets us in the oldest books of the world."

These facts can only be accounted for on the Bible account of direct instruction given to some of the primitive men by the Creator Himself. In succeeding ages, as men corrupted their way on the earth, they also corrupted, with their inventions, the truth they had received from heaven.

After the erection of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, it was the custom of Moses to repair thither whenever he wished to consult the Divine Oracle. "And when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with the Lord, then he heard the Voice speaking to him from between the two cherubims." This language is so minutely descriptive of place and of direction that it seems intended especially to guard against the misconstruction of modern critics. The voice comes from the space between the two cherubim that rest on the mercy seat. Its source is thus located by the ear in a specified place. Inner voices and impressions come not from a certain direction nor from a known place.

When the Lord descended in a fiery cloud upon Mount Sinai, "Moses spoke and God answered by a voice." Probably no ear but that of Moses heard this voice, but when the ten commandments were uttered on the same mount all the people heard the voice that proclaimed them. "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly, in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice." Here the whole congregation of Israel heard the commandments pro-

claimed with a great voice—a voice so great that it was heard by six hundred thousand men, besides women and children. It is no wonder, therefore, that when they heard, spoken in tones so intensely loud, these “words out of the midst of the fire they trembled and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, speak thou with us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die; for who is there of all flesh that hath heard the voice of the Living God, speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?”

During the contention of Aaron and Miriam against Moses, “the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the door of the tent. And He said, Hear now My words; if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make known Myself unto him in a vision; I will speak with him in a dream; My servant Moses is not so; he is faithful in all My house; with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even manifestly, and not in dark speeches, and the form of the Lord shall he behold.” Could conditions be so combined, or words so arranged as to make statements more explicit? The Lord stood at the door of the tent; Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam heard His words, in which there is a line clearly drawn between “impressions” and uttered words; between “dreams,” and “visions,” and “dark speeches,” on the one hand, and “manifest speech,” on the other. Moses was also accustomed to see even “the form of the Lord.” The utterances here quoted, to which might be added

many other passages of like import, are plain, simple, positive declarations. They are in no sense figurative, and they cannot, without literary violence, be construed into any mode of communication, except that of plain speech.

While Moses lived there was in the tabernacle a visible presence of God, or "open vision," which continued into the period of the judges, but seems at some time during the early part of that period to have passed away, so that in the days of Samuel there existed no "open vision," and even "the word of the Lord was precious in those days;" being heard then and ever afterward only on rare occasions; and finally "the word of the Lord," or audible voice, also passed away, and was heard no more until the new dispensation opened.

With the announcement made by the angel Gabriel to Zacharias, at the altar of incense, flashed the dawn of the gospel ages. Six months later came to Mary, through the same heavenly messenger, the Annunciation in clear, strong words; and in due time an angel announced to the good shepherds the birth of the Messiah, and a multitude of the heavenly host joined him in a Divine concert above the fields of Bethlehem and made the air vocal with praise.

If asked how angels, who are spirits, can produce sound in a material medium, like our atmosphere, we answer, "Some things can be done as well as others." Where is the source of power? How does electricity, an imponderable agent, influence ponderable material? How does

the ethereal sunlight kindle into living, developing forms the germs of the vegetable world?

We know not in what sort of medium angels ordinarily live and move. Their atmosphere may be the hypothetical ether, or light, which pervades the universe; or "a vast unfathomable life" may form the medium in which they live, and move, and talk. But, whatever may be the conditions of their being, they can live and work in our atmosphere, which is pervaded with light and probably also with life, and cause it to vibrate with annunciation or song, as easily as one of their number could strike dumb the mouth of Zacharias, or roll the great stone door from the entrance of Joseph's new sepulchre.

We know nothing about the essential nature of matter, nothing concerning the nature of spirit, and nothing in regard to the relations existing between them. How spirit and matter co-exist, and how they act, the one on the other, are processes that elude not only our senses, but also our keenest intellectual perceptions. Our *dicta* concerning these things should, therefore, be made with modifying statement and becoming humility.

The Divine Movement recorded in the New Testament is not accompanied with the over-awing material grandeur and splendor, which attended the interpositions and revelations of God in the Old Dispensation; but there is in it the more removed and more spiritual element that is better suited to the more advanced development and maturity of the human family.

Grace and truth, life and immortality, with easily and gracefully used power over the forces of nature and the causes of evil, were revealed in the familiar human form, and after the removal of the presence of Jesus, the power and the grace of God continued to be manifested only in the lives of His disciples, and in "signs and wonders" wrought by them, which consisted chiefly in healing the sick in the Name of Jesus. The few exceptions recorded are of a highly spiritual character, being accompanied only with the cloud of light or the gentle dove. At the baptism of Jesus the Christ, John and Jesus saw the descending dove, representing the Holy Spirit and heard a voice out of the open heaven, saying "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here the voice of the Father, uttered in the heaven, is heard by the Son and the Baptizer on the shore of the sacred Jordan.

On the Mount of Transfiguration a bright cloud, termed by Peter, "the excellent glory," overshadowed Jesus, Moses, and Elijah and the disciples; and "behold, a voice out of the cloud saying, This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." St. Matthew, by the word, behold, calls the attention of the reader especially to the voice, which was heard by the three disciples and produced on them so profound an impression that "they fell on their face and were sore afraid."

God has in every age manifested Himself in ways suited to the condition and needs of men. The "signs and wonders" wrought on various

occasions, in successive periods of history, were object lessons adapted to "the spirit of the times" and to the mental and spiritual condition of the people. They impressed upon the hearts of His wayward children a sense of the power, the goodness, and the majesty of God, thus cultivating their reverence for His Name. The Bible was written for the divine education of the human family and it was given in lessons as the slowly learning scholars were prepared to receive them, here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. In making known His will, God gave divers portions, at divers times, by divers methods. The greater part of the Sacred Scriptures were written by holy men of old as the Spirit of the Lord spoke in them, but when the occasion required it, the word was uttered by the Divine Voice and transcribed by the inspired penman.

Centuries have rolled by since these wonderful events and sacred lessons ceased. No more does the Everlasting Father cause His Voice to be heard in the silences of this world, nor appear in form to the eyes of men. The heavens are not opened above a Bethel nor a Patmos. The sky no more gleams with the pinions of angels. Prophets and apostles, and the incarnate Lord Himself have been received up out of our sight.

This was the natural order of the evolution of the Divine Government of men. In the infancy of the world the supernatural was necessary for its moral and spiritual education. But

in the world's maturity we must walk by faith, not by sight. Better than all Theophanies of the past is "the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." They were local and temporary, this is universal and eternal. They were for special times and peoples, this for all times and all peoples. "Heaven and earth shall pass away but My word shall not pass away."

"All that was of permanent value in past dispensations is here embodied in forms of thought and speech adapted to all the changing conditions of human existence. Every need of our spiritual nature is here provided for. The Book which contains the thoughts of God in the language of men, illumined and interpreted by the Holy Spirit who inspired it, is, next to Himself, God's greatest gift to man."

With St. John's Gospel and his general epistle, the Revelation of God in human language was completed, giving all that it was expedient for us to know through His Written Word; and now God speaks to the children of men only by that Written Word through the outer material eye, and by His Spirit to the inner spiritual ear. No more does the audible voice of God break the silences of our world, nor Theophanies dazzle human vision with their beauty and glory.

*THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT OF
MEN*

Say among the nations, the Lord reigneth;
The world also is established that it cannot be moved;
He will judge the peoples with equity.

—Psalm 96:10.

In the government of men, a great deal may be done by severity, more by love, but most of all by clear discernment and impartial justice, which pays no respect to persons.

—Goethe.

The moral government of God is a movement in a line onward towards some grand consummation, in which the principles, indeed, are ever the same, but the developments are always new—in which, therefore, no experience in the past can indicate with certainty what new openings of truth, what new manifestations of goodness, what new phases of the moral heaven may appear.

—Mark Hopkins.

God governs the world, and we have only to do our duty wisely, and leave the issue to Him.

—John Jay.

XI

THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT OF MEN

Of the order given by Moses to the sons of Levi to "put every man his sword upon his thigh, and go to and fro, from gate to gate, throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor," it was once declared from a prominent pulpit that "this was the greatest mistake that Moses ever made."

Let us examine this alleged mistake in the light of common sense, for in most matters that concern us this is the best and most reliable light we have, and when it is illumined by the Higher Light that shines in the spiritual sky above the plane of human reason, we may safely depend upon it in things spiritual as well as in things temporal. While we would not depreciate education, learning, and culture, we believe with Daniel Webster that "the experiments and subtleties of human wisdom are more apt to obscure than to enlighten the Revealed Will of God, and that he is the most accomplished Christian scholar who has been educated at the feet of Jesus and in the College of Fishermen."

To determine the magnitude of this mistake of Moses, and whether he made a mistake, or not, several things must be considered. The relation of God and of His servant Moses to the people must be carefully studied, and also the

political and moral condition of the people, as well as the times in which they lived, and the customs of the neighboring nations. Some principles of universal recognition must also be kept in view.

God was by absolute right their King. He made them a people, supplied their needs, and defended them against the assaults of their enemies. They owed to Him allegiance, service, reverence. They had also agreed, in solemn covenant, to be His subjects, saying, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Moses, under God's direction, was the leader, the law-giver, and the commander-in-chief, as well as the judge of Israel. He was invested with authority to issue orders, and to inflict upon the lawless and the rebellious the penalties approved in his time.

The punishment it is asserted was out of proportion to the offense. But was the offense a light one? Was the punishment, as is alleged, unjust or cruel? Now with regard to the offense, we have the estimate of its magnitude made by Moses in his address to the people, and also in his plea for them before the Lord. To the people he said, "Ye have sinned a great sin," and before the Lord he said, "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold."

In making these gods and returning to idol worship, they set up a government of their own and severed their allegiance to God, their King, whom they had covenanted to obey. This was disloyalty and rebellion, and was punishable with

death in all the kingdoms of old. Furthermore, the Israelites were organized into an army, and were fighting their way through hostile tribes to the land given to their fathers. Now no one, even in the light of the twentieth century, denies the right of a commander to have deserters and other delinquents courtmartialed and shot by their companions in arms, nor does anyone question the justice, or mercy even, of the general who exercises this right.

In addition to rebellion against God, their sovereign, the people were guilty of mutiny against Moses, their commander, and they persisted in their crimes after the return of Moses. When he issued the order, "Whoso is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me," only the sons of Levi obeyed. There was, therefore, no course left for Moses, but resort to military law, and enforcement of obedience at the edge of the sword. The leaders of the defection were, therefore, executed under his order, and the people, becoming submissive, were pardoned. It is here seen that Moses acted deliberately and legally. There is not in the history of this case the slightest evidence that he made a mistake, nor is any cause found in it for the charge of cruelty.

Moreover, if the commander of Israel made a mistake, then God is chargeable with the same error, for "the Lord said unto Moses, In the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them. And the Lord smote the people because they made the calf which Aaron made." The order of Moses was, therefore, issued and executed un-

der the Divine sanction and according to the prevailing custom of the time. He acted as any good commander would have done, with decision and promptness. That the execution of the order was painful to him is evident from his intercession with the Lord for Israel: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of the book which Thou hast written."

Moses, in fact, was a leader of rare qualities. Notwithstanding his great ability and learning, he was slow to accept authority, as shown at the burning bush, and he threw away ambition, seeking only the welfare of the people and sharing with them his honors. The so-called mistakes form part of a wise and necessary plan of discipline.

It has now been shown that Moses made no mistake in issuing and executing the order under consideration; that it was not an act of injustice and cruelty; but that it was an obligation, the execution of which was painful to his sensitive soul. He did his duty as a faithful and efficient commander, and thus received the approval of the Lord, who "smote the people because they made the calf," which was the symbol of disloyalty and rebellion.

This alleged mistake of Moses, therefore, leads up to a grave question. The prime responsibility is removed from Moses and reverts upon the God of Israel, who delegated to him the power to declare and execute judgment, and approved this particular act. The great question then is,

not whether Moses blundered, but whether the All-wise One made a mistake—whether the Lord God, merciful and gracious, committed, through his agent Moses, a cruel act. The same facts which, when logically considered, prove the justice of the order issued by Moses, will also justify God's approval of it.

Of old it was asked, "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?" And through the onflowing ages the answer was echoed and re-echoed in the affirmative, accompanied with the feeling, however, that was finally voiced by the apostle Paul: "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

The finite cannot comprehend the Infinite. We can only know what God reveals to us of Himself in the Works of Nature and in the Word of Revelation. And God can only reveal a little to us on account of our limited capacity. Nor can we comprehend the system of the universe, filling all space and extending through all time. We are only able to look a little way into the vast system, and to see but a small section of the plan that has no limit in space and no end in time. It is, consequently, often beyond our power to understand and explain clearly the judgments of God. It behooves us, therefore, in matters too great for us, to be humble, reverent, and submissive. "We know little, while we think we know much." But of one thing we may feel sure, that while clouds and darkness

are round about God, righteousness and equity form the foundation of His throne.

In the light now gained and in the spirit of humility, let us examine the question before us. So far as that part of it is concerned that relates to the possibility of a mistake, we may dismiss it without discussion, for it is impossible for Him who possesses infinite knowledge and wisdom, to err. The remaining part of the question might also be disposed of in the same way, since all God's "judgments are true and righteous." But as the righteousness and goodness of the Lord may not always be apparent to us in the punishments that He has enacted as the outgrowth of wrong-doing, it is well for us, so far as we can, to elucidate them, and

"Justify the ways of God to men."

When Solon was asked whether he had provided the best laws for the Athenians, he replied: "The best they are capable of receiving." Now, as laws must be adapted to the capacity of the people for whom they are made, so also must the penalties for breaking the law be suited to their intellectual and moral condition. Both must be adapted to attain the ends of justice, and the highest welfare of the whole people. A penal code suited to a people living in one age or country would not be adapted to another people living under different conditions. Punishments which, in an age of general enlightenment, might seem severe and cruel, would, among rude and uncultured peoples, be necessary for the preser-

vation of order and the discipline of the race and the individual.

For nearly four hundred years the Israelites were bondmen in Egypt. During that time they were pressed into abject slavery, and their minds, as the worship of the golden calf shows, became so imbued with the idolatrous religion of Egypt, that the mighty signs, wrought in their presence by the Lord, made but an evanescent impression on their hearts. It required indeed, the strict training of forty years and the destruction of the generation that was brought up out of Egypt to prepare them to carry the knowledge and worship of the God of their fathers into the land of promise. Nothing but the most overwhelming judgments could subdue their rebellious temper and impress upon their perverse minds a sense of the power and holiness of God. With the memory of the march through the Red Sea on dry ground, and the destruction of Pharaoh's hosts fresh in their minds, and in the presence of the Mount that burned with fire, they broke into open rebellion, made for themselves gods of gold, and worshipped them as their deliverers from servitude.

If treason and mutiny against human government deserve punishment with death, and man has the right under such conditions to inflict the death-penalty, much more has God, who gives life, the prerogative of taking away life when the right to live has been forfeited by men as free-agents, entrusted with the gift of life, and,

therefore, responsible for the use they make of the powers thus conferred.

The way of life had been opened to the children of Israel, but they turned aside quickly out of the way and "corrupted themselves." They voluntarily and persistently refused God's offer of mercy and brought upon themselves His righteous judgment. The punishment, at first thought, looks severe, but it assumes a different aspect when we remember that the rebellion was of gigantic proportions. More than six hundred thousand men persisted in their sin of rebellion and idolatry. As their sin was great, a correspondingly great punishment was required to meet the case. The Lord, therefore, smote the people, so that there fell throughout the camp about three thousand men—the leaders of the idolatrous defection. This punishment was an object lesson suited to the people and to the occasion, and brought them back to the service and worship of their Divine Sovereign.

Soon after this event there was given to Moses a declaration of the character of the God of Israel. The Lord descended in the cloud, and passing before Moses, proclaimed: "Jehovah, Jehovah, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation." Here we have a portrait of

the character of God, drawn in the beginning of Hebrew history, in an age of gross idolatry and fanciful myths—a portrait carried through the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, receiving here and there an additional touch, but continuing unchanged in its features, even up to the last and finest touches given by the beloved disciple in the final words of the Written Revelation, where, in the grandest generalization possible, all the powers and qualities of Deity are summed up in the triple formula: “God is life, God is light, God is love.”

This proclamation, granted to Moses, is a description of the Supreme Being as the Divine Sovereign of Israel, and it applies also to God in His relations with all nations, and tribes, and families, in every age and in every climate. The history of the Jews and that of the other nations of antiquity are convincing examples of the truth of this declaration, and we have only to look around us to see everywhere in existing nations and families that God is dealing with them as He did with the kingdoms and tribes of old. God, our Sovereign, as here revealed, is the kind of Divine Ruler that the erring, perverse peoples of the earth need. He is full of compassion, and of sympathy with human weakness and suffering; slow to anger, bearing long even with the wickedness of men; and plenteous in mercy and truth, keeping mercy for millions, and when nations and peoples become penitent, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. Here we might pause for an interval and congratulate the nations and

families of the earth on the flawless excellence of their Divine Ruler; but with all these gracious qualities, He would be a Sovereign, not perfectly fitted for the government and judgment of this rebellious and corrupt world. Iniquity, and transgression, and sin cannot be permitted to go on without restraint. The Ruler and Judge of the nations must be a God, not only of mercy and goodness and truth, but also of justice and equity in the administration of national and family affairs; "who will by no means clear the guilty;" who will visit the iniquity of the rulers and the ruled upon their nation, and of the fathers upon their children through generations. Numerous examples of this method of dealing with the nations and families of the earth abound on every hand, and herein is found an explanation of the oft-observed fact that "the innocent suffer with the guilty."

This is God's method—a necessary method—of dealing with men united into families and nations, but not with men in their individual relations to Him. Every man in his personal relation to God is responsible for his own conduct alone. The idea of personal responsibility to God, Daniel Webster said, was the greatest thought that his mind ever entertained. This great thought is intimately related to the great gift of free-agency, granted in trust, and for the faithful, or unfaithful use of which every one must give an account to his Creator and Judge, in whose presence his quickened sense of responsibility will either acquit or condemn him. "All

souls are Mine, saith the Lord, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Here comes to light the necessity of a General Judgment. Hence "God hath appointed a Day, in which He will judge," not the nations and the tribes of the earth, but "the world," every individual in it, "in righteousness," when there will be "a righting of all wrongs of the ages—a solving of all moral problems by an unanswerable wisdom;" when every individual who has lived on the earth shall find "his own place."

Of the necessity of some other place than this world where justice may in exact measure be meted out, Justice David J. Brewer says: "It is certain that absolute justice can never be administered by finite men. The judge must ever act with the consciousness that there is a domain into which he can never enter, and yet a domain filled with considerations which affect in the highest sense the matter of perfect justice. Two men stand before the bar. In the eye of the law they are alike, and yet in the essential elements of character, those elements which enter and determine the question and quantity of moral guilt, they may be as far apart as the Poles. One may be brought up in the best environment with every advantage of education

and moral training. The other may have passed his life in the midst of constant temptation, in the most demoralizing environment, every influence tending to drag him down. And yet these men standing before the bar of justice must suffer the same penalty for the concrete act of which they have been proven guilty. But in the eye of God there is a vast difference in the moral guilt of the two.

“What then? Believing in an Infinite Being, unseen, yet standing supreme over human life and human history, the question comes, Is it possible that in the lower range of things, in the domain of material nature, there is absolute certainty, and that certainty is within the limits of human knowledge, and that in the higher realm of the spirit the race must go on until the end of time, unable to ascertain or to act with certainty? Only one alternative is presented: In some other time and place the failures of justice on earth will be rectified. The inevitable failure of justice in this life is an assurance of a better life to come.”

In our investigation we have found that Moses, in the case considered, made no mistake and that the Lord was not chargeable with the sanction of an unjust and cruel deed. We have also found that the policy carried out by Moses and approved by the Lord was part of a necessary plan of discipline—necessary on account of man’s misuse of the Divine gift of free-will. We have found, further, the necessity of some other place and time, not of this world, where exact justice

may be meted out. We have, therefore, now reached a position from which we may take a clearer, wider view of the various punishments inflicted upon the children of Israel, and of the apparently cruel and terrible judgments executed upon the tribes that dwelt in the land which Israel invaded and gradually occupied.

The petty kingdoms of the land had become politically and morally corrupt. The people had lost, by yielding voluntarily to the base desires of their sinful hearts, their knowledge and worship of the Most High God whom their ancestors served. They had substituted a gross and sensual worship of monster idols, in which licentious rites formed part of the service, and innocent children "were passed through the fire" as offerings to their gods. They had filled up the cup of their iniquity, and had, with their abominations defiled the land which God had given them to dwell in, thus surrendering their right to remain its occupants, and so "the land vomited them out." To them God had for ages been merciful and gracious, and though their deeds were continually evil, He was long-suffering with them and gave them, not only years, but centuries of grace.

Unlike men, who are often swift to avenge wrong and often execute, with rash haste, the perpetrators of obnoxious crimes, the God of the nations does not move speedily in executing sentence upon evil works. He "makes haste slowly," and gives ample time for those upon whom sentence has been passed to turn from

their evil ways and live. Yet, when a people persist in their chosen sins, the execution of the sentence pronounced against them will take place in due time and in due order, "for the Lord will by no means clear the guilty." And so the time finally came for the execution of the sentence passed upon the tribes of Canaan, and their iniquities, running back through preceding ages, were visited upon the last generations who "filled up the measure of their fathers."

Now it must be remembered, in considering the judgments visited upon the tribes of Canaan, that war was the normal condition of the nations then existing. This condition was the natural outgrowth of man's alienation from his Maker. Hard-heartedness, cruelty, and vengeance had grown to be the virtues of those times. When, therefore, a city was captured by an enemy, men, women, and children, according to the customs of the time, were "put to the edge of the sword," and all perished together. The slaughter of the children with the guilty seems to be especially cruel, but it must be borne in mind that in those ages children were considered participants in the sins and crimes of the family and shared in the penalties. The exigencies of those times, resulting from national and religious corruption, justified to some extent this custom; and the law of transmission of sinful propensities in heredity, made it necessary for the Divine Ruler of Israel to incorporate, in some measure, the custom into the military policy of his people.

We can, in our narrow sphere, see only a few of

the conditions that stand out clear in the vision of the all-seeing One. God does not look upon death, natural or violent, as man does. In the presence of death we stand powerless and appalled. To man death is "the king of terrors." To God, the Fountain of life, death is but a change of conditions, and, while He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, that of His saints is precious in His sight, and the innocents, small and great, who have in this world been involved in the penalties of the guilty are cared for by a loving Hand and will come up in the great day of individual reckoning from all nations, and kindreds, and tongues to be judged according to the standard of personal merit.

The view which these briefly considered thoughts have enabled us to reach throws some light on the perplexing subject of Divine Sovereignty and Free-will, and leads up to the supreme question—the existence of evil. These, however, are part of "the secret things that belong unto the Lord our God." Nevertheless, the source of sin, when traced to its root, will be found in the perverse exercise of the will, which God, even in His Sovereignty, holds inviolable; and hence the responsibility for sin and its consequences rests with the free-agent.

"Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

God, in His wisdom and love, is working out His plan in the overflow of the reign of evil, and though the existence of sin with its direful effects

mars a small part of the work of God, and seems to defeat the Divine purpose in the creation of man, it only seems so to us on account of our limited range of vision. The Almighty One, who causes the water-lily, pure and white, to grow from the seed dropped in the mud of the pond, is evolving from the old, corrupt world a new one of purity and beauty. The evolution, like all God's plans, goes on slowly and almost unperceived, nevertheless, it will ultimately unfold in eternal beauty and glory.

"The thoughts of God are timeless, and the thoughts of God are one," and though a Divine thought, or purpose may seemingly come to naught, it only looks so; for "an apparent defeat of the Divine purpose is ever the occasion of the unfolding of a further purpose," which includes the original purpose that seemed to be thwarted. In the fall of man the purpose of God in his creation seemed to be defeated, but God made that seeming defeat the occasion of a further unfolding of His purpose in the promise then first made of the Coming Man, of whom all the Scriptures testify, Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Savior, who was manifested that, "through death, He might bring to naught him that has the power of death," destroy his works, and bring all things into accord with the Divine Will, "according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself." The Eternal Word became the Perfect Man, "God manifested in the flesh," and the work that He came to do will, when completed, be also perfect. The chil-

dren of God will regain in Him, not only the dominion of the earth, largely lost in Adam, but, acquiring new privileges and becoming co-heirs with Him of all things, will also share in His Universal Dominion. The redeemed will ultimately come up out of all nations and out of all seas, and "old things having passed away and all things become new," will live in eternal activity and blessedness, the Lord God Omnipotent will reign in peace and glory for evermore, and we shall evermore behold the King in His Perfect Beauty.

P R A Y E R

Now Mine eyes shall be open, and Mine ears
attend, unto the Prayer that is made in this place.
—2 Chronicles 7:15.

Pray without ceasing.

1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Religion is no more possible without prayer than poetry without language, or music without atmosphere.

—James Martineau.

Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold of God's willingness.

—Phillips Brooks.

Worship is the earthly act by which we most distinctly recognize our personal immortality; men who think they will be extinct a few years hence do not pray. In worship we spread out our insignificant life, which yet is the work of the Creator's hands and the purchase of the Redeemer's blood, before the Eternal and All-Merciful that we may learn the manners of a higher sphere, and fit ourselves for companionship with saints and angels, and for the everlasting sight of the face of God.

—H. P. Liddon.

XII

PRAYER

The place of prayer in the Divine Government is a subject of perplexing interest to many thinking people. Extreme views are held on this, as on most other questions in which men are interested. The human mind, swayed often by the heart's impulse, swings like a pendulum, to and fro between the extremes of its intellectual sweep. Thought in one direction is followed by reactive thinking in the opposite direction, and thus, from the various points of view taken, that position which seems most desirable to the mind, or is most in accord with the feelings of the heart, is finally occupied.

The various opinions relating to prayer are thus due to different view-points. Some who desire not the knowledge of God's ways, ask:

"What is the Almighty that we should serve Him?
And what profit should we have if we pray unto Him?"

Others, who hold God to be a power as unmoved by prayer as the power of gravitation, ask:

"How doth God know?
And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

There are others, however, who believe that "The Lord is nigh unto them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth," that "The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul

that seeketh Him." They believe that God speaks truly when He says, "Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken to you. And ye shall seek Me and find Me when ye shall search for Me with all your heart."

The thoughts of old concerning prayer have come down through the ages and crop out in the thinking of our times in forms not very unlike those in which they found expression among the ancients. A modified form of the old unbelief is in the following statement:

"God is perfect,
Change implies ignorance, weakness, imperfection;
Therefore, God is unchangeable, and unchanged by
prayer."

Analyzing these statements we find the argument stands thus:

Perfection is unchangeable;
God is perfect;
Therefore, God is unchangeable, and unchanged by prayer.

If the middle term, perfection, used here, be a universal term the conclusion is correct.

Now, there are many kinds of perfection, and many qualities enter into the constitution of the perfect being or the perfect object. And instead of accepting the statement that perfection is unchangeable, the question may be raised whether change is not an essential element of perfection. Let us look at things as they are, for though we may take them as they seem, or distort them to fit our own theories, they continue, notwithstand-

ing, to be what they are. And this is true in God's revelation given in His Written Word, as well as in the revelation made through His Works.

If we look into the vegetable world, it will be found that the plants that pass through the greatest and most prolonged changes are the most perfect. The fungus, lowest and least perfect of plants, springs up in a night, and remains unchanged in form, texture, and beauty. The fruit tree, the most perfect specimen of plant life, evolves the nutrient sap and spreading branch, bud and leaf, flower and fruit; producing thus, through revolving years, series after series of beautiful changes.

In the realm of animal life we find also the same law. The higher the animal in the scale of being and the more perfect its nature and form, the more numerous are the conditions of its life and the greater the changes through which it passes. Man, who stands at the head of the scale of life, the most perfect in form and adaptation, "the paragon of animals," far excels them all in the changes through which his evolution unfolds him. Through infancy, childhood and youth, maturity and old age, changes are incessantly going on. The lower animals, on reaching maturity, remain in a comparatively unchanged condition. Man, more richly endowed, and less influenced by environment, runs his course with individual changes so constantly evolving that a score of years will so transform him that his old friends can hardly recognize in him their former companion.

Observing the inanimate world, we see everywhere changes innumerable and unceasing, unfolding to the eye an ever-moving panorama of beauty and sublimity. Day and night alternate in their display of Nature's works, and with the revolving year the seasons return, bringing verdure and blossom, leafage and fruitage.

Man's work remains fixed. The only change through which it passes is that of decay and ruin. The statue and the painting never present a new color nor a changed attitude. The masterpiece of the architect stands forever in the same unchanged angles, lines and planes. Not after this method does the great Architect build. His works are made according to predetermined laws and conditions that are evolving perpetual changes, presenting thus to our thought and taste ever-varying views that awaken inquiry and delight.

All these endless evolutions and changes, by whatever apparent causes produced, are the outcome of one creating and upholding Power. One Force projects and sustains, and one Mind directs and controls the numberless worlds that form the universe, while Life, Light, and Love evolve under the direction of one Will the progressive changes that are ever tending toward the ultimate purpose of the Creator. Higher and higher rises the Living Structure, declaring to the prophetic eye the thought translated into human speech by England's philosophic poet:

"One God, who ever lives and loves;
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves."

Under the directing Will of God all the forces of the universe act. They all work together in harmony with the Creator's controlling and directing Power. Hence the universe is not a lifeless machine, made in a cast iron mould, precluding change and evolution. There are wheels within wheels, forces and laws, though invariable, so fitted into their place that each one fulfills its part without jarring the others.

To some of these laws exceptions exist. The expansion of water, on cooling into ice, for instance, is an exception to the law that cold contracts bodies. This exception, however, like others, is beneficent.

To most of nature's laws there are no exceptions, or only apparent ones. Smoke ascends, and through the action of heat aqueous vapor rises into the atmosphere. Many rivers flow uphill. The Mississippi, for instance, is about four miles higher at its mouth than at its source. These facts, though apparently setting aside the law of gravitation, do not interfere in the least with its action. The variations in the movements of the heavenly bodies are corrected, in their time-cycles, by the laws that control their motions. In these variations there is no law annulled, suspended, or modified. We thus see that natural laws, though some exceptions and variations exist, operate in perfect harmony, and that the way is open for the All-Powerful, All-wise Creator to make changes and modifications without disturbing a law or causing a jar in the working of the universe. Browning insists that God

is still at work on the world, and that no law prevents Him from answering prayer. In Luria he says:

“All changes at God’s instantaneous will,
Not by the operation of a law
Whose Maker is elsewhere at work.
His hand is still engaged upon this world—
Man’s prayer can force it,
Man’s prayer suspend.”

In accordance with this reserved power of the Creator were wrought the signs recorded in Holy Scripture. Healing the sick and raising the dead were in harmony with natural law; for life and health are normal conditions. Joshua’s astounding miracle was wrought through the reflection and the refraction of light in changed atmospheric conditions around the globe, without the slightest disturbance in the movements of the solar system. Even the general resurrection of the dead will probably be the final outcome of laws now operating in a great time-cycle. As the seed, dropped into the fertile soil lies buried during its brief cycle of death and decay, furnishing the germ that develops into a new plant, so the lifeless body, consigned to mother-earth, will furnish the germinal dust out of which the new body will come forth in power and glory, when the time-cycle of death’s reign closes, and “what is mortal becomes swallowed up of life.” The Lord holds the keys of death and the grave, and when the appointed time rolls around the gates will be unlocked, and the dead will come

forth as naturally as the plant grows out of the seed laid away in the genial soil.

Some of the miracles recorded in the Bible seem to interfere with the laws of nature, but on a careful study of them it will be found that the disturbance is only apparent. The passage of Israel, for instance, through the Red Sea, on dry ground, with a wall of water on each side of them, looks like a disturbance of gravity, but was not the law of gravitation in force everywhere, except at that one little spot? There was, in fact, no more disturbance of the law of gravitation than there is of the equilibrium of electricity in the charging of a battery, or the transmission of a telegram. As in these there is only local disturbance, produced by human agency, so in that there was only local disturbance, effected by Divine agency. No law was suspended. In machinery constructed by man, if the most minute part is disturbed, the movement of the whole machine becomes deranged or stops. This defect never occurs in God's work. He so made the worlds that a local phenomenon which seems to us a disturbance of the laws of nature, and which is to us a miracle, does not produce the slightest discord in the harmony of the universe.

We probably draw too broad a line between the material and the spiritual. We know nothing about the essential nature of either. We discern only their phenomena—their powers, properties, and changes. To observe the changes, properties, and powers which an object—water for ex-

ample—assumes under varying conditions, often awakens very suggestive thoughts. Below a certain temperature water is a passive solid. Raise the temperature a few degrees and it becomes a flowing liquid. Add a few more degrees of heat and it becomes changed into floating vapor. Raised to a high temperature it is transformed into steam—a gas invisible and powerful.

Now the Eternal Word, manifested in the fullness of time in Jesus the Christ, created all things and enacted the laws of their existence and transformation. Jesus, therefore, had power over force and matter, over life and death. The winds and waves obeyed His voice; bread and fishes multiplied under His blessing; death departed and life came back at His command. He had power over His own body to lay it down in death and to take it up again, transformed into a spiritual body, endowed with the life eternal. St. Paul informs us that those who are living in the day of the resurrection of the dead shall be changed, their material bodies changed into spiritual bodies, in a moment, in the twinkle of an eye. If we bear in mind these facts we shall form a clearer conception of the manifestations which Jesus made in His resurrected body to His disciples.

Probably the most wonderful record in the Bible is that concerning the movements of our Lord in His resurrected body. He could appear suddenly to His disciples, or vanish out of their sight instantly. He could pass through material walls as easily as we can move through the air,

and appear in the midst of the disciples assembled in a room with closed doors. Here we have an intimation of forces and laws controlling matter, concerning which scientists have, as yet, learned nothing. These higher forces also operate in harmony with the lower, known forces.

It may be objected that this view of miracles lessens their force. By no means. God's Will is the controlling Power of the universe. The fact that He so enacts and operates its forces and laws as to allow special phenomena, or miracles, which He can bring to pass without causing any disturbance in the working of those forces and laws, whenever He wills, makes the glory of His Wisdom equal to the glory of His Power.

God of His own Will, according to His own council, moved by His unchanging love, so planned and constructed the universe, with its forces and laws, that there is ample room reserved for the play of His own free energy, according to His wisdom and love. As the court of equity reserves to itself, on petition—which was originally made to the King—"the power to grant more speedy and ample justice" than the written law can give, so the Eternal Spirit, of whose energy and action the lightnings flash is but a shadow, working evermore in accord with the laws of the universe, also works in special ways, by reserved power without annulling or suspending those laws. Man, made in the image of God, and consequently endowed with the gift of free-will, also works. He may co-work with God, without disturbing the laws of nature, in bringing to pass special purposes.

Here opens the province of prayer. The prayer of faith, offered according to the Will of God, will be heard and answered in harmony with the laws of the universe. The Father in the heavens guards with special care His children. He knows their needs, and is found by those who seek Him, and gives to them who ask. He numbers the hairs of their heads, and sends His angels to minister unto them. He is moved with the feeling of their infirmities, and sustains them in temptation, making a way for their escape. He so loved them that in eternity He put into the plan of the universe a Special Design for the redemption of the fallen, degenerate sons of men, and "when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them who are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Being adopted into the family of God, we have access into the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle, not made with hands, through our great High Priest and Advocate; and if we ask in our prayer according to His will, He hears us. There are two conditions on which the answer to prayer depends—the petition must be offered according to the will of God, and he who offers it must be one with God. "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you," said Jesus, "ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." The will of the petitioner must move within God's will, and since "God worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will," there is here opened a wide field for the work of prayer.

Having shown that God works in special ways in accord with the construction and laws of the universe, let us now endeavor to acquire a knowledge and sense of His willingness to hear and answer the prayers of His consciously dependent children.

The relation existing between the earthly father and his child demands the provident care of the father. Would not the father who so formed his plans as to preclude his own free action in ministering to the special needs of his children be considered unwise, and indifferent about their welfare? The more perfect the character of the father is, the more careful in forming his plans will he be to allow himself ample scope for ministering to the daily wants and special needs of his children. If this be so with the earthly father who is commanded to be perfect even as his Father in heaven is perfect, it must, in an infinitely higher sense, be true in the government of God our Father.

It is true, as made known in Holy Scripture, that God, in character, is unchangeable. "He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever." His power fails not, nor does He grow weary; His wisdom never errs, nor does His love become cold. This unchangeable perfection of the Divine Being, however, does not preclude change of purpose nor change of action. God is not bound by decrees of fate. He is not merely a God afar off, but also "nigh at hand," noting even the falling of a sparrow to the ground. He who created free-agents, endowing them with sense, and

reason, and love, must also Himself be free to act, as His wisdom and love may direct. Had God so constructed His works as to allow no change, nor progress, nor His own Personal adjustment of special conditions, whenever He wills, that would have been evidence of imperfection in His character. The fact that God brings to pass many things that are outside of, but in harmony with, the laws of nature is evidence of His perfection.

The Perfect One is not only God Almighty, upholding all things by the word of His power, but also the Everlasting Father, guarding in love the well-being of His children, hearing and answering their cry in the hour of need. Though He is the center and soul of every sphere, He is to each loving heart very near. "For thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is my footstool; what manner of house will ye build unto Me? and what place shall be My rest? For all these things hath My hand made, and so all these things came to be, saith the Lord; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My word. Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

We have here a declaration of infinite condescension. The Eternal God, whose throne is above all heavens, looks to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at His Word. Not to the mighty, and the noble, and the haughty of the earth, not though they build temples to Him does God look, but to him who feels his dependence and helplessness. The prayer of meek-

ness and penitence always reaches the ear of our Heavenly Father, and is answered in loving-kindness and wisdom.

The power of weakness and humbleness finds many illustrations in common life. A few years ago a widely known orator, in crossing a street in New York, passed in front of a hack. The hackman, without checking the reins, called to him to get out of the way. Scarcely had he reached the other side, when every vehicle on the street suddenly stopped. On looking to see the cause he beheld in his track a helpless little child, whose presence even the rough men heeded, and whose little person they guarded from harm. Weakness was powerful where strength was helpless.

In the home the younger and weaker children receive most of the mother's care, and if one of them is afflicted her ear is keenly sensitive to its cry, and her heart strongly moves her to minister promptly to its wants. The love of God who is the source of love in the mother's heart, is more powerfully moved by the cry of His children in need than that of the most perfect mother.

God is more ready to forgive than we are to repent, more willing to give than we are to ask, more desirous to be found than we are to seek Him, and more willing to do great things for us than we are to believe.

In every individual there is planted a germ of prayer which, if heeded and cultivated, will bring its possessor into touch with God. Because of the neglect of this religious sense multitudes rush or

plod on in the highway of life, unmindful of their relation to God their Father until some affliction or calamity arrests them, and then they complain that the Lord is a hard Master, forgetting that they have been rebellious children and that the evils of which they complain have come upon them through their own disobedience. God's goodness and kindness ought to lead all to a life of obedience and love, but so great is the perversity of man's will that in a life of sunshine and prosperity he forgets God, and when adversity comes, instead of being submissive and thankful, he chides and blasphemes God, or falls upon his knees in piteous lamentation.

"There is no God, the foolish saith,
But none, there is no sorrow,
And nature oft the cry of faith
In bitter need will borrow;
Eyes that the preacher could not school,
By wayside graves are raised,
And lips say, God is pitiful,
That ne'er said, God be praised."

Life is real, life is earnest, but its conditions, in one aspect, are variable and uncertain. We know not what an hour may bring forth. Tomorrow is not today, and he who rests his hopes of tomorrow on the conditions of today, may find the ground sinking under him before tomorrow comes. Hence it is the part of wisdom and safety to "pray without ceasing" and look ever to Him who is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

"He that glorieth," says St. Paul, "let him glory in the Lord." Why in the Lord? Because he

who seeks his chief good in pleasure, or riches, or learning, or position, or any other created thing, glories in something which is passing away and is destined to fail in the hour of need, while he who glories in the Lord will find his feet upon a rock and his head above the clouds when the waves of adversity roll over him, or death meets him face to face.

When we open the Bible we find therein very plain directions for those who pray. He who taught with authority said: "When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret, will give to thee in the light."

No forms of prayer were given by the Lord. They were left to be formed by the spiritual conditions and needs of him who prays. Jesus warns against much speaking and vain repetitions, and gives a short example to show after what manner prayer should be made.

The method of praying which Jesus here enjoins accords with the spirit of prayer—the out-breathing of the soul in the secret place of the Most High. When he who prays is thus moved, he instinctively enters his most private retreat and shuts himself in with God. This is the literal import of our Lord's command, but may there not be hidden in it a more spiritual meaning? Do we not in prayer enter into the inner, spiritual chamber of our being, and shutting out the world, find our Father who seeth in secret? Closing our eyes upon the things that are seen, "the eyes of

the heart," open to behold the invisible God revealing His presence. "When I pray," said Lady Tennyson, "I see the face of God smiling upon me." He who in the secret chamber of his soul beholds the face of God, walks through the world radiant with life, light and love.

God's mercies are of old, His loving kindness from everlasting, and His delight has ever been with the sons of men; yet there are many among the sons of men today who think the Divine Ruler of the world, as presented in the Old Testament, was cruel, narrow minded, and revengeful. In modern occidental thought the tendency is to push God out of human affairs, beyond the established order of the world, and to attribute all phenomena to the forces of Nature and the agency of man. The authors of Holy Scripture, on the other hand, were accustomed to think and speak of God as immanent in all the forces of Nature and in all the affairs of men. In natural phenomena and in the social relations of men they discerned the overruling power of Jehovah, and in special events they saw the directing "finger of God." Hence they wrote of the events of their times as if they came to pass through the direct power of God. They did not study the causes leading up to those events, nor magnify the agents engaged in effecting them. To guard against error, therefore, in studying the writings of the Bible we must bear in mind the modes of thought and expression prevailing when they were written.

The best way to attain a correct idea of the

character of the God of Israel is to find out what their greatest and best men thought of Him.

We have their idea of the power and wisdom of the Creator in the words, "He spake and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."

Abraham looked to the Lord as "the Judge of all the earth," and felt that "He would do right."

To Moses God proclaimed Himself, "Jehovah, merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy."

When Joshua was old he called together the elders, and the judges, and the officers of Israel, and said unto them, "Behold this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in your hearts and in your souls that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord, your God, spake concerning you."

When the people conspired against the Lord, and chose to have a king to reign over them, Samuel said unto them, "Ye have this day rejected your God, who Himself saveth you out of all your calamities and distresses."

David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, sang:

"Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous;
Sing unto Him a new song;
For the word of the Lord is right,
And all His work is done in faithfulness;
He loveth righteousness and judgment;
The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the Lord.
O taste and see that the Lord is good;
Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him."

At the dedication of the Temple, Solomon, in his prayer, said: "O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like Thee, in heaven above, nor

on earth beneath; who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants that walk before Thee with all their hearts." To the people he declared, "There hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses, His servant."

The prophet Isaiah, whose lot fell upon evil times, testified that "The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint and to him that hath no might He increaseth strength."

In his prayer for His people Daniel says, "As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us; yet have we not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, that we should turn from our iniquities and have discernment in thy truth. Therefore, the Lord watched over the evil, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all His works, and we have not obeyed His voice."

Nine competent witnesses have now testified. They all agree in their evidence concerning the character of the Lord their God. All the sacred writers concur in this evidence. When the Bible, therefore, is carefully and sincerely studied, it will become evident that the Creator who is made known to us in the first chapter of Genesis, and through the various books of the Bible as the Divine Sovereign of the nations, is the same unchangeable God who is revealed as Love in the last word of Revelation. Special customs and

laws, which, in the civilization of the twentieth century, seem harsh—though some of them are still in vogue—were permitted on account of the hardness of men's hearts, and for the purpose of meeting the needs and conditions of those times. The Lord, as everywhere revealed in the Bible, is the truth-loving, just, merciful God, who cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance, but is ever ready to hear the cry of penitence and to answer the prayer of humility and faith.

“The Lord is nigh unto them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth.” Unlike the potentates of earth, who can only be approached on special occasions and in prescribed forms, the Lord is ready everywhere and at all times to receive those who call upon His name, and the only conditions required, are penitence and faith. “He who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, who stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, bringing out the host of the stars by number, by the greatness of His might, and calling them all by name,” engraves his children, not merely their names but themselves, upon the palms of His hands. “His eyes are over the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers.” With what childlike confidence and assurance then ought we to come into the presence of God our Father! We need no letter of introduction, for we are engraved upon the palms of His hands; we require no herald to announce our coming, for His eyes are over the righteous; nor do we need an interpreter, for His ears, which distinguish the tones and accents of every language, are open to the

prayers of all who draw near to Him. He is ever ready to receive us, ever glad to listen to our petitions, and ever able to grant our requests and to supply our needs.

From myriads of altars all the world over the sweet incense of prayer, blessing and purifying the moral atmosphere, is hourly ascending to God. Every individual who ministers at these unseen altars is blessed and strengthened according to his faithfulness and devotion. He stands in the presence of Him who is Life, Light, and Love; and while he prays his spiritual life is renewed, the light that is in him grows brighter, and his love becomes more ardent. And while he is himself blessed in offering prayer, others may become partakers, through his intercession, in his blessing, and the special prayer of faith may, through the power of the Holy Spirit, move the hearts of men to action, or direct and modify the forces of nature. Prayer moves the Arm that moves the worlds. John Wesley says, "Prayer has two effects: one upon God, and the other upon those who pray;" and to these is added a third, namely, "the effect wrought by the Spirit of God upon those who are the subjects of prayer." So accustomed was Wesley to receiving answers to prayer, and so fully did he expect to be heard, when he prayed, that he took it for granted he was heard and went on with his work. Charles H. Spurgeon so habitually received answers to prayer, in temporal affairs as well as in the spiritual life, that he looked upon them as "part and parcel of the established order of the universe."

Prayer is one of the silent forces at work in the earth, and so things wrought thereby attract but little attention in the gay, busy, skeptical world. One of Tennyson's characters says:

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let Thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day;
For what are men better than sheep and goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands in prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friends?
For the whole round world is every way
Bound by golden chains about the feet of God."

Holding in the hand one of these golden chains, each one of us may look up and pray:

O, Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! All Thy works praise Thee. The heavens declare Thy glory and the firmament showeth Thy handiwork. Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness, and Thy paths are strewn with blessings suited to our needs.

From the thralldom and the guilt of sin Thou art the only deliverer, the only Savior; amid the circling gloom of this world Thou art the only Light; in the turmoil and unrest of life Thou alone givest rest and peace.

All our springs are in Thee, yet we are forgetful of Thee. We forsake Thee, the fountain of living waters, and hew out for ourselves cisterns whose waters become stale and bitter. We turn aside from Thy paths and walk in our own ways. We pray, Thy Will be done, and then do our own will. We seek happiness and our highest good

in the inventions of men—in the pleasures, and follies, and allurements of the world. In vain we strive to attain abiding peace and joy in what the world has to offer us, for Thou hast made us for Thyself, and uneasy are our hearts until they find rest in Thee.

Thou art the Fountain of life; out of Thy life breathe life into our lives, that, being born from above, we may lead a new life, following the commandments, and have life more abundantly. Thou art the center of light; enable us to seek Thy face without ceasing, that we may evermore dwell in the light of Thy countenance, and have spirit, soul, and body full of light. Thou art the Source of love; make us one with Thee in Thy unchanging love, so that we may perfectly love Thee and be kindly affectioned one to another, forgiving one another and living a life of service and sacrifice.

Enable us to live upon the high plane of purity and righteousness; may we abide with Thee in heavenly places and, having the eyes of our hearts enlightened, behold as in a mirror Thy glory and become more and more changed into Thy image and likeness, until our characters become arrayed in the beauty of holiness and in the holiness of beauty, and we show forth in our life and conduct all the gracious, and transforming, and refining influences of Thy glorious gospel.

Let Thy word and Thy love dwell in us richly in all wisdom and spiritual understanding that we may be able to discern the things that are

excellent. May we use the world as not abusing it, and enjoy Thy blessings without perverting them. Enable us so to control our thoughts, and emotions, and impulses, and so to order our steps that when the evening time of life comes it may be light, and we may be accounted meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and to see the King in His Beauty and reign with Him forever.

THE INCARNATION

Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son
and shall call his name Immanuel.

—Isaiah 7:14.

And she brought forth her first-born Son, and
wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him
in a manger.

—Luke 2:7.

God be thanked for that good and perfect gift,
the gift unspeakable: His life, His love, His very
Self in Jesus Christ.

—Maltbie D. Babcock.

'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for! my flesh
that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be
A Face like my face that receives thee; a man like to me
Thou shalt love and be loved by forever; a Hand like
this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the
Christ stand!

—Browning.

Every unfulfilled aspiration of humanity in the
past; all partial representation of perfect character;
all sacrifices, nay even those of idolatry, point
to the fulfillment of what we want, the answer to
every longing—the type of perfect humanity, the
Lord Jesus Christ.

—F. W. Robertson.

We know in Thee the Fatherhood
And Heart of God revealed.

—J. G. Whittier.

XIII

THE INCARNATION

The subject stated above is almost too sacred for criticism, or even investigation; nevertheless, in "the spirit that inquires and yet believes," let us reverently consider some of the questions that it involves.

As of other articles of faith, so of this, men differ in opinion. Some deny the facts stated by the evangelists, and others doubt, while a goodly number believe. As it is well for those who believe to be able to give a reason for the faith that is in them relative to any subject that appeals to belief, we may very judiciously, and perchance also very profitably, examine the basis of our faith in the Virginal Birth of our Lord. The facts in the life of Jesus can only be reasonably accounted for by accepting the fact of His Divine Birth. And in His Birth into our world, as told by the evangelists, there is to them who believe in God the Creator really no more mystery than in an ordinary birth. Both belong in their essential nature to the mystery of life.

Since the Virginal Birth of Jesus is enveloped in so much apparent darkness and mystery and is so generally misunderstood, let us try to turn more light on the subject and disperse some of the darkness.

"All the myriad phenomena of the universe," according to the latest word of science, "are

manifestations of a single animating principle, which is both infinite and eternal." This animating principle, this persisting energy is the creating, animating word of God that is still vibrating in every atom and cell throughout the whole realm of nature.

With this picture of nature before us we can readily see how natural and reasonable it would be for the Eternal Spirit, without the aid of a material medium, to infuse a spiritual germ-life into a material germ-cell, already quivering with vital energy.

Just before His ascension Jesus said to the disciples: "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses." Words used to describe the work of the Holy Spirit lose, when so used, their gross, material meaning. In the scripture just quoted the word used by our Lord and translated "to come upon" is used also by St. Luke in relation to the Divine Conception. In both examples the word is used in its highest sense. As in the new spiritual birth the Holy Spirit "comes upon" the soul with power, and breathes into it a new life, so in the Virginal Conception He breathed a Divine germ-life into a virginal germ-cell, and thus imparted to it power to develop into the Divine Man—the only perfect Man that has ever lightened our darkened world.

Those who recognize above nature a Personal Being, of infinite power and wisdom, whose will is the working force of nature, hold that God, in the evolution of the universe, put forth creative

energy and that he imparted genetic energy to the various species of living things, both vegetable and animal, on the earth; so that by the union of two particles of germinal matter, differing in sexual qualities, plants and animals are propagated and multiplied through the ages of the earth's history. These statements being admitted as facts, it must also be granted that God, who is the Power above nature, could, if He so willed, impart immediately to the ovule or germ-cell the energy necessary to enable it to develop into a living form.

Adam and Eve were made, were created. Angels and all the heavenly hosts were made,—were the sons of God by creation; but when the Eternal Word was about to come into the world, God put into a living particle of germinal matter a Divine genetic force, and out of the union of these two life-forces or life-substances was begotten Jesus the Christ who, being in due time born into the world, thus had, united in His own person, two natures—the Divine and the human. Therefore, being born of a virgin, who represented humanity, He was “the Son of Man,” and being directly begotten by Divine power, He was also “the Son of God,” and since all other beings are either immediately, or mediately, the products of creative power, He alone stands for ever and ever, “the only begotten Son of God.”

Into the created man God breathed the breath of life; into the Begotten Man God embodied His own Personality.

In the plan of Divine Manifestation and Hu-

man Redemption it was befitting that Jesus the Christ should draw part of His parentage from the special humanity that had been Divinely selected out of the best humanity, and from that person in it in whom, after ages of development and discipline, humanity had drawn nearest to God; it was also befitting that He should draw His life from the Fountain of All Life, thus making it evident to all the world "that in Him the Race was to find its spiritual center and true focus of reconciliation; and that from Him *the very life of God* should by very human means be conveyed into and become the life of men the whole world over.

"For this is both the amazing claim and the equally amazing achievement of Jesus of Nazareth: that by Him there should be inwrought into the hearts of men of the most utterly diverse races, types, traditions and characters, the very temper and disposition of the Living God."

The glorious gospel of Christ moves above the plane of human thought. Words fail in every attempt to give full expression to the experience of the individual who, born from above, leads a new life by walking and living in the Spirit—the Spirit of Christ. The incarnation, the life, the crucifixion, the resurrection and glorification of Jesus have always seemed foolishness to the cultured Greek and a stumbling block to the self-righteous Jew. The learning and wisdom of this world, in attempting to elucidate the Gospel, only become more bewildering darkness. Viewed in its own white light, however, Christianity is

seen to be, not out of harmony with great Nature, but in high accord with the plan of the universe. It is seen to be the highest, greatest work of the Creator—the power of God and the wisdom of God. The penitent, awakened, enlightened soul accepts it as the highest of all needs, and rests and rejoices in the Eternal Father's love that fore-ordained for us and presented to us "His unspeakable Gift."

If we turn to the open book of nature and read its suggestive pages as they are interpreted by science we find that they more or less clearly point to a personal manifestation of Deity as the real secret, the ultimate purpose of the evolution of the universe. "The whole doctrine of development, as it is conceived by the deepest and clearest minds," says Henry van Dyke, "looks forward to the discovery of an incarnation which shall be at once the crown and completion of evolution. If nature is an orderly and progressive manifestation of an Unseen Power; if each successive step realizes and exhibits something higher and more perfect, to which all that has gone before has pointed, and in which the potentialities of all previous developments are not only summed up, but raised to a new power; if the mechanical structure of inorganic substances contains a prophecy (only to be interpreted after the event) of organic life, and organic life is a basis for instinct and the elementary processes of intellect, and these rude processes of thought and feeling in the lower animals foreshadowed the unfolding of reflective

reason and moral consciousness in man,—then surely this reflective reason and this moral consciousness, in themselves confessedly imperfect, must be only the foundation of a fuller and more perfect manifestation of that Unseen Power, out of whose depths all preceding manifestations have come forth. And if the universal verdict of human Science and philosophy is correct in assuming that the lower must precede the higher, and that organic life is above inorganic life, and that reason is above instinct, and that virtue is above automatic action, then it is to be expected that the complete manifestation of that Unseen Power that makes for reason and righteousness will neither be omitted, nor intruded before its time. It cannot come too soon without violating the order of evolution. It cannot fail to come without destroying the significance of evolution.

“But in what form can it come except in one which at once sums up all that has gone before it, and advances to a new level? If the universe contains an unveiling of the might and wisdom, of the reasonableness and righteousness of its Primal Cause, then certainly it must contain at last an unveiling of His personality. This is the only thing that remains to be added. This is the only thing that embraces all the rest and raises it to a new power. The highest category known to our minds is that of self-conscious life. Without the conception of a personal God man’s view of the universe must remain forever incomplete, incoherent, and unreasonable. Without the revelation of a personal God the process of

evolution as the unfolding of the real secret of the universe must remain unfinished and futile. Philosophy as well as religion pushes us forward to this conclusion. Personality is the ultimate reality. Personality must be the final revelation. But a person can be unveiled only in personal form. Therefore all the presumptions of reason are in favor of an incarnation of the Deity, not outside of nature, but in nature, to consummate and crown that visible evolution whereby the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen. And all the processes of intelligence are satisfied, and rest and repose in the conviction that the Word who was in the beginning with God and who was God, and by whom all things were made, finally became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, revealing His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

With this process of evolution in the Works of God accords the account of the creation given in the Written Word of God. After finishing the work of creation "God saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good." Here we have from God a statement of approval after reviewing His works when finished. The Creator on this review of the newly made works of His hands felt some degree of satisfaction. In this witness, however, to the goodness of His works there is no expression of joy and delight, negatively indicating that they were only rudimentary and preparatory, and that in the unfolding of the universe there was something yet

to come, an ultimate object not yet reached. When that object is attained we may look for another expression of approval, not merely from the Divine Mind, but also out of the Divine Heart.

Cycles of human history roll by and kingdoms rise and fall until "in the fullness of time" He, who was born in Bethlehem amid the worshipping angels comes up out of the waters of the Jordan baptized for His life-work, when out of the opened heaven is heard a voice: "Thou art My Son, My Beloved; in Thee I am well pleased." Herein is given, not merely the calm, unimpassioned judgment of God the Creator, but the most joyous and exultant expression of approval and love out of the Heart of God the Father. In His only begotten Son is not only manifested the power and wisdom of God, but also His tenderness and love. He is the flower of the creation, the highest and most perfect expression of the Divine Nature. Jesus is the Light of the world—the Light in whose radiance all things grow brighter and clearer. He alone solves "the riddle of the universe." He is the "one great, bright Pathway which," says Charles Kingsley, "I find more and more to be the only escape from infinite confusion and aberration, the only explanation of a thousand human mysteries—I mean the Incarnation of our Lord, the fact that there really is a God-man." "The man who can accept Christ as the Son of God," says Dr. John Watson, "has got, I thoroughly believe, the secret of the universe. He is in the way of life everlasting; he

is walking in the path of light which will lead to the fullness of day."

During the ages preceding the life of Jesus upon the earth, God revealed Himself to men in the beauty and goodness of His works, in types and shadows, and through the imperfect medium of human language; but when "the fullness of time" came as foretold by the prophets, He inaugurated in the little town of Bethlehem the revelation of His love and beauty for which all preceding revelations and all the antecedent facts of history were preparatory. The Eternal Father becomes a child and lives a human life that Divinity might be manifested in humanity, "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord;" and that humanity might be lifted up out of the slavery and darkness of sin into the liberty and light of "the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God."

Having now shown the possibility, the probability, and the reasonableness of the Divine conception and birth recorded in the holy gospels, let us proceed to consider the question that first suggested the writing of this paper: "Why was it necessary for Jesus to be born of a virgin?" To this question, born of that curiosity which moves the mind to inquire into the causes of things, especially those of an extraordinary character, a composite answer must be given. The

all-embracing reply is that it was God's order—a part of the beautiful and sublime plan of human redemption and of Divine manifestation. God sent the Eternal Word into the world to live a human life and die on the Cross, not only that the world through Him might be saved, but also for the purpose of declaring the Father, and making Him known more fully to men and angels—to the principalities and powers of the universe. In the life of Jesus, therefore, God has probably given the supreme manifestation of the Divine Nature, not only in this world, but also in all worlds; and hence “when He bringeth in the First-born into the world He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.”

Before the heavens were unfolded and the earth was prepared for the abode of man, the birth of Jesus was assigned its proper place in the unfolding of the universe, and when the first human pair through wilful disobedience marred the image which they bore of their good Creator, the first annunciation was made. In the Lost Garden the Lord God said to the agent of the tempter: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.” Thus it was of the offspring of the woman, not of the man, concerning whom this oldest word of prophecy was uttered. From this distant and dim foreshadowing of the Coming One prophecy continued to become more and more explicit, till finally the evangelical prophet cries out: “Behold a virgin shall conceive, and

bear a Son." What Isaiah beheld in vision became, seven centuries later, real in the land of Israel, and was recorded by the holy evangelists. Thus the Eternal Word became man and lived a human life. "God was born of a woman that man might be born of God."

In the virginal birth of our Lord there may be involved reasons that lie entirely beyond our range of thought. We must limit our study to those that fall within the narrow sweep of our knowledge.

Through the disobedience of the woman in Eden the tempter and destroyer prevailed, and man thus became subject to "the law of sin and death." He sold himself into "bondage under the elements of the world"—"The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." So keenly did the families of old feel the oppressive force of this law that for their sins they offered in sacrifice the most costly of their possessions, and, on occasions of great extremity, even sacrificed their first-born son, the fruit of their bodies, for the sin of their souls.

Holy Scripture announces the law that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission," but in "the nature of things" it is not possible for even the priceless blood of the first-born son to take away sin. That man might be delivered from the law of sin that he has imposed upon himself, and that "God might be just in justifying him who believes," the shedding of blood infinitely more precious than that of any created being was necessary. God chose, doubtless,

the best and probably the only way in which the required sacrifice could be made for man's rescue from the curse of sin. In the mightiest created arm there was no power that could break sin's yoke. In the life of the tallest archangel there was no efficacy that could bring salvation to a lost and ruined race. To counteract the deadly poison of sin and save humanity the antidote must be sought in uncreated Power. Sin is a crime against the Divine Government. In the act of sinning man forfeited life. Now, as God alone can give life, He alone can restore forfeited life. And as the law requires life for life, He alone could pay the price for life forfeited. God, therefore, sought in Himself the means of satisfying His own sense of justice, and in the fullness of time made atonement for sin, thus making it possible for man to have life restored and to have it in abundance.

In the Living Oracles where in the work of human redemption is unfolded, we learn that "from the days of eternity" there was with the Father, the Living Word," who "had all power in heaven and in earth, by whom all things were made." He, "according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" undertook for helpless, enslaved humanity the arduous work of redemption, and "when the fullness of time came God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them who are under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." The plan of redemption, thus ordained and executed through the justice and

love of God, gives us an overwhelming realization of "the infinite holiness and sensitiveness of the Divine Law. There is no point in immensity where the finger of sin can touch it without that touch being felt by Him who ordained it."

Our faith in the birth of Jesus, as recorded in the holy Gospels, rests upon the voice of prophecy as heard in the Living Oracles of God, and upon the plain, simple, unimpeachable testimony of the blessed virgin-mother, as recorded by St. Luke the evangelist and "beloved physician." Her witness, accepted without dissent by the disciples, was necessary on the human side of the case, to establish belief in the Virgin-birth of our Lord, and she could give that witness only by maintaining her virginity till after His birth. Her evidence was made indisputable by the accompanying circumstances which, had they so transpired as to throw doubt upon it, would have caused her character to be assailed, and she would have become chargeable with the deepest and most barefaced hypocrisy and sin. Nothing, however, intervened that could throw a shadow of doubt upon her testimony. She knew in her own mind and heart, and from the annunciation of the divine messenger that the conception of her First-born Son was effected by Divine Power, and so exalted was her character for purity and truthfulness, and so accorded the life of Jesus with her statement that there was no room left for doubt. Indeed, her belief in these facts of her experience, concerning which her knowledge admitted of no doubt, must have

had great influence in confirming the faith of those who first accepted the claims of her Son and Lord.

In addition to the voice of prophecy and the witness of the highly favored virgin, we have in the first inspired dream of Joseph, as recorded by St. Matthew, the angelic testimony to the Divine-human birth of Jesus. The value of this witness cannot be overestimated. Such is angelic knowledge and veracity that there can be no flaw in angelic evidence. So Joseph thought, and hence received with implicit faith the testimony of the angel and followed his direction.

The purpose for which the Eternal Word came into our world and lived a human life required an extraordinary birth. Had Jesus come into the world by ordinary generation, He would not have been "the Son God" in any special sense; He would not have been "the Son of man," but only the son of a man; and there could have been no efficacy in His offering Himself, a sacrifice for the sin of the world, nor any merit in His appearing as our Advocate in the Court of Heaven. He would only have been a man among men, and His death upon the Cross would have been of no more significance than that of Peter, or of some other great and good man. An extraordinary birth was, therefore, necessary for the Redeemer and Savior of men. For Him who "came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," who was "manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil;" who was "God manifested in the flesh,"

it was necessary to be Virginally born and Divinely born. Only such a birth accords with the life, and words and works of Jesus, as recorded in the Holy Gospels.

The incarnation of the only-begotten Son of God, from its inception to its consumation, was pure and spotless. The immaculate conception occurred, not in the genesis of the blessed Virgin-mother, but in the parthenogenesis of her first-born Son. It is not said of her that she was without sin, but of her Son and Lord it is written that "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin;" that "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." There was "no fault in Him."

We doubt not for a moment that God, who can change common clay into the emerald, and transform carbon into the diamond, could make an ordinary conception immaculate, but that would require a special and unnecessary interposition of Divine Power. Since God does not expend energy unnecessarily, nor outside of the demands of the Divine Order, and since the word "blessed" is the highest term used in the Gospels relative to the Virgin-mother, the inference that the only immaculate conception was that of "Him in whom was no sin" is, therefore, clear and conclusive. The Divine genetic power that moved to vital action the ovule, produced in the ovary of the blessed virgins, sanctified at the same time that human germ, so that the product of its evolution was pure and holy. Jesus was immaculate in His conception, made so in the simplest

and most natural way conceivable; was immaculate in His life, in thought, word, and deed; and triumphed through His purity and holiness over the tempter and enemy of humanity.

The attempt, through "regard for sound scholarship and established conclusions," to account for the circumstances attending the birth of Jesus, on the common legendary and mythical instinct of mankind, is neither creditable to sound scholarship, nor to sound common sense. "The common working of human faith and human imagination under every sky," it is urged, "gives substantially the same fairy-tales and folk-lore." Among these myths everywhere prevalent was "the idea of hero worship and incarnations which," it is claimed, "was familiar and popular." This idea was "familiar and popular" in India, but incarnations were never familiar and popular, nor even recognized, among the Hebrews, and only among the Greeks in their early history; and hero worship in the Roman world, including the Hellenic and the Jewish, had well-nigh died out before the advent of our Lord. The fact is, "sound scholarship," so called, fails to distinguish between the true and the false in the world of religious thought.

The difference between the statements in the holy Gospels relating to the birth of Jesus and those of a mythical character, is the difference between genuine coinage and that which is counterfeit. The account given by the evangelists carries its own evidence of truthfulness in the simple, natural, and ungarnished statement of

the facts related. No character stands out so prominently and so clearly in history as that of Jesus of Nazareth. The consistency, and the completeness, and the beauty of His life cannot be accounted for without admitting, as historical facts, the events recorded of His birth. In the apocryphal gospels of the Infancy, abounding in puerilities and prodigies, we have fair samples of the literary fruits of human thought when influenced by a love of the mythical and marvelous. But how unlike these is the account of the Infancy given by St. Matthew and St. Luke. In their statements we have the soberness of history and the wisdom of God.

The circumstances attending the birth of Jesus, when carefully considered, point to a directing power above the concurring facts that enter into the history of the unique event. The decree of Augustus Caesar, made when Quirinius was governor of Syria, that all the Roman world should be enrolled, forced out of Nazareth into the highways Joseph, the carpenter, and Mary, his espoused wife. They had to take a journey of a hundred miles to enroll their names in the proper register; for though peasants, royal blood flowed in their veins and they belonged to the city of David. "And it came to pass while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born Son; and she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Thus the will of the Roman emperor, like an invisible hand,

forced the humble virgin along the tedious journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, and unwittingly caused the fulfillment of the ancient prophecy: "But, thou Bethlehem Ephratha, which art little to be among thousands of Juda, out of thee shall One come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings-forth are from old, from everlasting."

"O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet, in thy dark streets shineth
The Everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight."

In little Bethlehem, therefore, came and went the greatest event in the world's history; and yet the world had no room but that of a stable for its new-born King. Necessity gave Him the lowliest apartment of the inn for His birthplace and a manger for His cradle. Born thus, a helpless babe in the department of the Bethlehem Kahn assigned to its mute guests, Jesus, the newly born King, commenced in humble environment that life which, though meek and lowly, was more than kingly in grace, beauty and power. The heart of every Christian experiences the spiritual reality of which the lowly birth at Bethlehem is the symbol. "The Christ is always born *in* the life of a man *at* the lowliest point, in order that He may be divinest in His power to save." "Jesus, the loftiest, enters, as Jesus ever must, at the lowliest point."

Nothing connected with God's plans and work is without special significance. Hence, there is in every event connected with the birth and life of our Lord a definite meaning and purpose. The words that He spoke and the works that He performed were given Him by the Father; the incidents of His life were of Divine direction, and each one was fitted into its proper place.

The life of Jesus, "who was to illustrate divinity at its loftiest by dwelling in humanity at its lowliest," was lowly and humble. He humbled Himself in the lowly place of His birth, in His home in despised Nazareth, in the course that He pursued in His public ministry, and in the mode of death that He chose to die. As the world had no place for Him at His birth, so it continued to refuse Him a place "where to lay His head," and when the opportunity came He was violently forced out of the world. The stone manger that first held His tender body proved to be the symbol of His cold hard way through life.

The ass, most humble, most lowly, and the least pretentious of animals, was present at the nativity of Jesus, thus representing the mute creatures of the earth which are part of "the creation that groaneth and travaileth in pain with us," on account of man's degeneration, and are "waiting for the revealing of the sons of God." The mediatorial work of Christ, as here indicated, reaches down in benediction even to the mute animal.

"To the principalities and powers in the heav-

only places" the Divine manifestation in Jesus made known the manifold wisdom of God. When, therefore, "God's only Son" was born into the world all the angels of God worshiped Him. An angel of the Lord announced His coming, and a multitude of the heavenly hosts, bursting through the cloud that hides them from mortal vision, appeared to the good shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem, "saying, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Then came the good shepherds with haste to the Kahn and found the babe, as the angel had said, lying in a manger.

While these events were quietly coming to pass in Judea, a new but long expected star shone out in the heavens, and was discerned in the East as the star of the newly born King of the Jews by Magi of the Far East who, after a journey of many months, came, guided by the star, into the house where the holy family was then living in Bethlehem, "and saw the young child with Mary, His mother. And they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures, they offered unto Him gifts,—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

These wise and good men, pilgrims from ancient Persia, represented at the cradle of the Lord the wise and good of the Gentiles, as the good shepherds did the devout in Israel. The birth of Jesus, the new-born King, was thus honored by the mute creatures of the Kahn, representing the animal families of the earth; by the outshining of the Lord's star, representing the ma-

terial universe; by the devout shepherds and the coming of the Magi, who represented the human family, Jew and Gentile; and by the worship of all the angels of God. At the coming of the Heir of Universal Dominion, as was befitting, all parts of the universe were represented, in acknowledgement of submission and loyalty.

Of one order of beings, however, that, like the angels of God, move unseen through the earth, no mention is made. "The angels that kept not their first estate" had no representative at the birth of the King. His sovereignty they repudiated, and His reign they will oppose till He has put all enemies under His feet.

Mary, the Virgin-mother, kept all the facts attending the birth of Jesus through the years that followed, "pondering them in her heart;" and while living in Jerusalem, in the home of the beloved disciple, she related them to the apostles and evangelists, who placed upon record for the instruction of the whole world, as full an account of them as they, guided by the Spirit of truth, were moved to give.

Our Lord left no word relating to His advent into the world, but His Virgin Life, set forth in His words and works, as they are recorded in the Holy Gospels, is a perpetual witness to the truth of the statements made concerning His Virgin Birth by St. Matthew and St. Luke. In His Life there was no inconsistency—no discordant note. The wonder of His Birth fitted beautifully the wonder of His Life, and out of His wonderful Life fittingly came His voluntary

Death upon the Cross, His glorious Resurrection out of the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and His triumphant Ascension "far above all heavens."

In the Incarnation of the Eternal Word God has given us the supreme revelation of His own Personality, and the true Ideal of humanity redeemed and perfected.

*“THE TEACHER COME FROM
GOD”*

Out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

—Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2.

The multitudes were astonished at His teaching; for He taught them as having authority.

—Matthew 7:29.

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You never get to the end of Christ's words. There is always something in them behind. They pass into proverbs—they pass into laws—they pass into doctrines—they pass into consolations; but they never pass away, and, after all the use that is made of them, they are still not exhausted.

—Dean Stanley.

Christ's method is divine. His words have the charm of antiquity with the freshness of yesterday; the simplicity of a child with the wisdom of God; the softness of kisses from the lips of love and the force of the lightning rending the tower. His parables are like groups of matchless statuary; His prayers like an organ peal floating round the world and down the ages, echoed by the mountain peaks and plains into rich and varied melody, in which all devout hearts find their noblest feelings at once expressed, sustained, and refined. His truths are self-evidencing. They fall into the soul as seed into the ground, to rest and germinate. He speaks, and all nature and life become vocal with theology.

—Bishop Edward Thomson.

XIV

THE TEACHER COME FROM GOD

That the human family needs a "Teacher come from God" cannot be disputed. The greatest and wisest among men claim the possession of only a small stock of knowledge and wisdom, even with regard to the world in which we live. The originators and propagators of systems of philosophy and religion, while following the obscure light of tradition and intuition, the uncertain teaching of analogy, and the unauthoritative conclusions of deduction, were ever conscious of the need of more light than reason could furnish them. Confucius, when asked to teach something about the future life, replied: "I know not this life; how shall I teach anything about the life to come?" Plato longed for the coming of a Divine Teacher.

The ideas concerning "the three essential elements of religion—God and man, and their mutual recognition; out of which, when put into practice, spring worship, love, and reward," were comparatively clear, simple and correct in the early history of the first nations of the old world. "So also was the first worship—a song and a prayer, natural to a soul, joyous, hopeful, and loving its Maker;" now and then a simple offering or an atoning sacrifice being added. This was true of religious thought and custom in Egypt, in India, in Greece, and in

all the ancient nations and tribes. Among some of the early clans, especially the Persians, the name and knowledge of the true God continued long, in comparative purity. There were many, like Melchizedec, who worshiped "the Most High God." Plutarch, says that "Numa, following the doctrine of Pythagoras, who was of opinion that the First Cause was not an object of sense, nor liable to passion, and discernible only by the mind, forbade the Romans to represent the Deity in the form either of man or beast. Nor was there among them formerly any image or statue of the Divine Being. During the first hundred and seventy years, they built temples indeed, and other sacred domes, but placed in them no figure of any kind, persuaded that it is impious to represent things divine by what is perishable, and that we can have no conception of God but by the understanding."

Time gradually obscured these primitive ideas and customs—divine revelations made to man in the beginning and carried by Noah across the flood—while reason and impulse, not satisfied to let truths like these alone, added myths and systems of mingled truth and error, filling every place, earth, air, and sky, with false deities, and imposing upon the credulous, oppressive and even sensual service and worship.

While the first cycle of history, commencing with Noah, was passing away and the nations were organizing within their appointed boundaries, the knowledge of God was fading out of the human heart, and men, "though knowing

God, glorified Him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became foolish, and changed the image of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Extinguishing thus through vain reasoning, inflated wisdom, and moral corruption the light possessed by the primitive men, the wise and the prudent of the ancient kingdoms, in the hardness of their heads and hearts, were left to grope their way in the gloom of speculative investigation and the darkness of Superstition. And "as they decided not to have God in their knowledge," nature even refused to give up to them the key to her secret laws and forces. In vain were inquiries made as to *whence* things came to be, *how* they came to be as they are, *what* they are, and *what* they are to be. Only in recent times, indeed, have men been learning what things are, and penetrating into the hidden elements and forces of matter and life. But even now, while men are finding in nature answers to the question, what? science gets no positive response to the questions, how? whence? whither? To illuminate these the lamp of science must be lighted by a flame not of science.

To prevent the true knowledge and worship of God from becoming lost among men, one family was chosen to be conservators of the truth already given, and recipients of additional

truth. Located, after four hundred years of wandering and training, in a central place among the nations, though but little better themselves, with individual exceptions, than their neighbors, the chosen people became the custodians of truths that silently and steadily influenced the thought of the world around them. Through the truths, thus committed to their keeping, the contemporary nations were more or less blessed and prepared for the coming of the "One greater Man" in whom God had given the promise to Abraham that all nations of the earth should be blessed.

As God raised up prophets in Israel, so He gave great teachers in the Gentile world. Gautama in India, Confucius in China, Socrates and others in Greece, born with endowments of mind and heart and blessed with conditions and culture that enabled them to develop into intellectual and moral princes, each evolving systems of thought in conformity with his environment, were powerful factors in the intellectual, social, and religious life of their people and of the world. Their teaching, however, though containing excellent practical rules, much elevating thought, and more or less truth, rested only on the sanction of tradition, intuition, and speculative genius—a foundation far too defective and narrow to build on for eternity. The yearning of the human heart for something substantial and authoritative, upon which to rest its faith and hope, demands a teacher from other than an earthly source. The earnest, sincere soul longs for a Divine Teacher.

Has no provision been made for this want in our nature? Is this, the most vital of our needs, left unsupplied? No, no! Our Father in the heavens, who created no faculty or instinct without its counterpart, has sent into the world a Divine Teacher, and whoever beholds with clear vision Jesus of Nazareth will confess, as did Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a Teacher come out from God."

Before commencing to teach, before gathering any disciples about Him, Jesus received, as was befitting a Teacher come from God, spiritual endowment for His work, and the approval of Heaven. Coming up out of the water after His Baptism, the Heavens were opened unto Him, and the Holy Spirit, in a bodily form like a dove, descended upon Him. This form was seen only by Jesus and John; and a voice, heard only by them, came also out of Heaven, saying, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased." This was the Divinely-given sign by which John was to recognize the Great Teacher, and of this he bore witness to his disciples. During the transfiguration on Mt. Hermon, toward the close of the earthly ministry of Jesus, this voice was again heard out of "the excellent glory," and then was added the charge: "Hear ye Him." This charge was omitted in the sign given to John, the baptizer. He had received His message and had nearly fulfilled his course, but Peter, James, and John were disciples of Jesus. It was, therefore, not only essential for them to hear Heaven's approval of their Master, but also to hear what

the Father had given Him to teach, and to become assured beyond doubt that what He taught came from the Fountain-head of knowledge, and was, consequently, of unquestionable authority. They heard for the other apostles and for the human family the voice of approval: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" to which was added the voice of authority: "Hear ye Him."

Jesus was, therefore, according to His credentials, a Teacher come out from God. He crossed from above the line between God and man. He came out of the unseen world into the seen; He was a citizen of both worlds; and the whole world of truth was spread out before Him. The law was given by Moses, and fragments of knowledge were imparted by the prophets, but, "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." He brought truth from Heaven to earth—was the embodiment of truth, was the truth. He spoke that which he knew and testified of that which He saw. He was Master of all truth and spoke as easily on the most profound subjects as men talk on the common affairs of life. Not only phenomena were manifest to Him, but also substance and cause, powers and forces. In Him dwelt all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom. Consequently, His teaching rested not, like that of men, on tradition, investigation, and deduction, but on His own unlimited knowledge. Therefore, He taught with authority and power, so that men were filled with astonishment at His teaching.

Independent and masterly thought leads to

fearless utterance. Jesus, though meek and lowly in person and humble in environment, possessed infinite resources within His own mind and heart. He did not base His teaching even on the "Living oracles" entrusted to the custody of Israel. He was careful that none of the Scriptures should be broken, and as they testified of Him, He used them to prove the validity of His teaching and claims. In the sight of men "He was only a poor peasant from a despised province, without any following, single-handed and alone; yet He hesitates not to attack any doctrine however popular, any authorities however powerful; He never bends to the lofty, nor looks askant at the most humble." He taught openly and boldly.

The power of His teaching was equalled by the love that flowed in it. The kindness and gentleness of His heart poured grace upon His lips. The officers who were sent to arrest Him returned helpless, saying: "Never man spake like this Man." His enemies bore witness to "The gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth." He taught with simplicity, grace and beauty.

Jesus was impartial in His teaching. He recognized no class. Wherever and whenever He found a heart willing to hear the truth He gave the needed instruction. Nor did He ever modify in the least His teaching to accommodate the prejudices or win the favor of His hearers. He taught with equal plainness and force the proud, scholarly pharisee and ruler who came to Him by night; the rich, prepossessing young man who

went away sorrowing; and the poor, disreputable woman at Jacob's well. He addressed men as men. He taught the universal brotherhood of men.

All truth, all goodness, all beauty center in Christ. His teaching is the standard of all spiritual truth. "By His word we test all doctrines, conclusions and commands. This is *the* source of authority in the kingdom of heaven. If Christ did not know and preach the truth then there is no truth that can be known or preached." If Christ is not the Light of the world, then the world has no light.

In training His disciples, Jesus encouraged them to ask questions. He sometimes set His teaching in obscure statement to excite the questioning instinct. This method awakened the minds of His disciples to intense activity, and started in them various sorts of perplexities, and then they came to Him for their solution.

In the teaching of Socrates a similar method was used. He would ask question after question from different sides and angles of the subject under consideration.

Both methods had in view the same end, namely, to awaken in the mind independent activity. There is, however, a very important distinction between them. Socrates asked the questions and his disciples tried to answer them. Jesus incited his disciples to ask questions which He answered. The ultimate purpose in each case caused this distinction. The chief aim in the school of philosophy was mental discipline; the answers to the

questions were of minor importance. In the realm of philosophy this may be a very wise object, but it would be very unwise in the domain of religion. It was chiefly saving truth of which Jesus was the Teacher. In the pursuit of this the mind is also developed and disciplined, but we dare not rest satisfied with the pursuit alone. We must have the answers to the questions of the soul and incorporate them into our life. Hence, while Socrates questioned, Jesus answered questions; and to Him men, after floundering in the mazes of doubt and inquiry, will always have to come for the solution of the problems of the soul. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

The teaching of Jesus was unique. It differed so widely from that of other teachers that, while there are many lines of contrast, there are but few of comparison. The great teachers of the world were educated in the schools, founded their teaching mainly on scholastic authority, and taught according to scholastic methods. Jesus, until He was about thirty years old spent His time toiling in the carpenter shop of Nazareth. His home and the synagogue of His city furnished the elements and the sum of His earthly education. He was not learned in the scholastic sense. He was not a man of letters. He sought no school.

The great teachers collected about them the learned and scholarly. Their teaching reached not the ignorant and the lowly. Jesus chose as His disciples plain, unlettered men, with no thirst

for merely human learning, and developed in them thought, energy, and character unequaled in the schools.

The great teachers of the world evolved finely spun theories, worked out visionary systems of doctrine, and laid down rules relating to the most trivial duties. Jesus indulged in no speculative discussions, organized no system of doctrine, and formed no code of rules. His teaching was spirit and life, having in it the elements of growth and development. He instilled into the minds of His disciples great living principles, applicable to every condition in life, and to the needs of every individual.

The great teachers spent their time largely in deducing conclusions from premises real or assumed, and their knowledge, to a great extent, consisted of these uncertain conclusions. Jesus never philosophizes. He never investigates nor goes through reasoning processes for Himself. He utters the most profound truths with the utmost ease and beauty. He never doubts nor hesitates; never is snared nor surprised; never blunders nor makes a mistake. Once when talking to the Jews about truth that comes from God, and lies that are the offspring of the devil, He fearlessly challenged them: "Which of you convicteth Me of error?" That challenge still floats from the oft-assaulted but unshaken battlement of truth erected by Jesus.

Other teachers were of the earth. In its darkness those of them who were earnest and sincere felt after God and searched for truth. Jesus

came out from God; He descended out of the clear light of heaven into our world; He dwelt in the white light of truth and knew the truth. His teaching was, therefore, clear, luminous, and positive, while that of others was dark, doubtful, and uncertain.

Other teachers taught merely moral reformation, secured by forsaking evil ways, and spiritual elevation attained by self-abnegation and good works. Jesus taught the necessity of a higher spiritual life, to be entered by a spiritual birth, followed by moral reformation as a natural sequence, and spiritual elevation in thought, motive, and impulse.

"The teaching of Jesus," says Henry van Dyke, "differs from that of all other masters in its fontal quality. It is comprised in a little space, but has an infinite fullness. Its utterance is closely bounded, but its significance is inexhaustible. The sacred books of other religions, the commentaries and exposition of writers on the Christian religion, spread before us a vast and intricate expanse, like lakes of truth mixed with error, stretching away into the distance, arm after arm, bay after bay, until we despair of being able to explore their coasts and trace their windings. When we come back to Christ we find, not an inland sea of doctrine, but a clear fountain of living water springing up into everlasting life.

"Calm, pure, unfathomable, it is never clouded and it never fails. The inspiration of other teachers rises and falls like an intermittent

spring. Today it is brimming full ; tomorrow it is empty and dry. The Spirit always rests upon Him. The Father is always with Him. Out of the deep serenity of His soul, as from some sacred vale of peace high among the eternal hills, the living spring of truth wells up forever, and forever the crystal stream runs down to refresh and revive the souls of men."

Jesus found always the point of human need and perplexity, and every word He spoke went straight to the mark. "He spoke of sin and announced a credible pardon, thus addressing Himself to what is perennially the bitterest of all human troubles: He spoke of the cares and distresses of daily life, unveiling the fretful and selfish anxieties which run under the current of men's lawful enterprises, and pointing the way to a simple, unharassed life: He spoke of the homely virtues, of ailments in character, of the preciousness of opportunity: He spoke of the human soul, of its rights, its worth even in the most degraded and self-despairing, its responsibilities, its possibilities, and the issues which may lie before it: He spoke confidently and convincingly of God as Father and an accessible Spirit, so answering and satisfying the deepest Godward craving in men; and He dwelt most of all on God's holy and gracious purposes for mankind in the establishment of the Kingdom of God, a condition of things in which all unrighteousness would be done away, and man would be reunited to man and brought into fellowship with God in a life governed by love, and indestructible by death."

Jesus did not preach a distant, metaphysical God, dwelling alone in eternal sovereignty, and indifferent about the welfare of His subjects, nor a kingdom of the skies vaguely posthumous, but a God near at hand radiating in Him, the King of Kings, a Divine Kingdom of which He said: "It is at hand; it is in you; the strong force an entrance into it." He did not teach us a religion of inert contemplation but of action and life. Poor Himself, He went to the poor; suffering, He went to the suffering; a Man of Sorrows, He bore the burdens of the sorrowful. "His was not a religion of pious memories which in wonderful caskets shut up treasures of long ago that are now useless among men. He taught a religion for all time, addressing Himself not only to the conscience of His contemporaries, but speaking of things and conditions which are not existing even yet. He had the faith that moves mountains. Such a religion does not resign itself to evil; it declares war against it. It does not prostrate itself in mere Platonic worship of the good; it wishes that the good may be, and strives to create it. It labors, sows, forges, and builds. It is creator, in a word, and permeates the world as leaven does the dough."

When Jesus began to teach lurid shadows hung over the unseen world, and impenetrable darkness veiled the future. In the heathen world, the most luminous altar was that dedicated to the unknown God; and among the chosen people a Hebrew monarchy, having dominion over the nations of the earth, was the ideal future. Out-

side of this world and beyond this life hung the fearful shadows of the unknown. The dim, flickering light of philosophy sent no ray out into these shadows. When men looked into the tomb they saw no light on the other side. Darkness ahead of them, darkness around them, and darkness above them without intermission reigned. That voice which has filled the world with light and hope rung out through those shadows: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he die yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." To the upright in heart and to those who are seeking soul-rest and peace there now ariseth light in the darkness, and the shadows disperse. Jesus alone has taught us anything with clearness and authority on the unseen and unknown.

Jesus illuminated life and made it worth living. He showed how, amid its cares, and sorrows, and bereavements, we may have contentment, and blessedness. Buddha taught that all existence is evil and vanity. The outgrowth of existence is pain and sorrow, the cause of which is desire, and hence rest can only be found in extinguishing desire by virtuous self-discipline ending in the oblivion of self-consciousness. Jesus taught that existence is real and good; that life is a blessing; that we should glory in God and rejoice evermore; that forgiveness of sin and soul-rest are to be found in Him, the meek and the lowly, the loving and all-sufficient Savior. "Come unto Me," He cries, "all ye that are weary

and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

The social rule of Confucius, "Whatsoever ye would not that others should do unto you, do ye not unto them," has been set over against the "golden rule" of Jesus. This rule is negative and admits of improvement, while that of Jesus is positive and, like all His utterances, cannot be amended. Underlying the rule of the Chinese sage is discerned the principle of social policy. For the sake of peace let others alone. Do not wrong them. A wise and politic rule this, but cold as the heart of selfishness. At the close of a life lived strictly by this rule, a man might take a retrospect and say of it,

"I lived for myself, I thought for myself,
For myself and none beside—
Just as if Jesus had never lived,
As if He had never died."

Through the "golden rule" of Jesus, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," is breathed the spirit of love. Love worketh not merely no ill to its neighbor, but it is also kind and seeks opportunity to do good. The words of Jesus throb with life, glow with light, and overflow with love.

Every word spoken by Jesus pulsates with life and every work that He wrought was specially significant. They are sometimes so full of thought that we have to "look before and after"

to see even a little of the fullness of their meaning. This is especially so in His words and acts after His resurrection. To illustrate, let us take one example. When, in the morning of the third day, Mary Magdalene was about to touch Him, Jesus said to her, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to the Father: but go unto My brethren and say unto them, I am ascending unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God." A little while afterward He permitted some of the women who came to the sepulchre, to embrace His feet. Now why did Jesus grant to these women a privilege which a little while before He withheld from Mary Magdalene? To answer this question we must go back to the service of the Tabernacle, and study the official work of the Highpriest on the day of atonement. We find that while He was making atonement for the sins of the people no man was permitted to be with Him in the tent of meeting, for a human touch would have caused ceremonial uncleanness in the Highpriest. To avoid this He sanctified Himself and entered unaided and alone the Holy of Holies. After he had made atonement and returned into the tent of meeting He could again be touched.

This official service of the Highpriest was a figure foreshadowing the atonement made by our universal Highpriest for the sins of the whole world. Jesus Christ, having prepared His sacrifice by shedding His own blood on the Cross, single-handed and alone entered after His resurrection into the "True Tabernacle," com-

pleted the atonement, and returned between the time of His first appearance to Mary Magdalene and the time of His manifestation to the women whom He permitted "to hold His feet and worship Him." A human touch, as in the case of the Hebrew Highpriest, would have been contaminating prior to His return from the heavenly Holy of Holies, after the pattern of which the Hebrew Holy of Holies, the place of atonement, was made. All the ceremonial law of the Old Testament is fulfilled in the words and works of Jesus, who is Himself the New Testament.

At the close of His earthly ministry the disciples said unto Jesus: "Now we know that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God." This perfect, all-embracing knowledge makes the style of Jesus in thought and expression the perfection of simplicity and beauty, and renders processes of reasoning unnecessary; but, "Though He reasons not for Himself," says Bishop H. W. Warren, "He does for others. Would that we could catch its succinctness, clarity, and perfect persuasion. Of immortal spirits Milton says they

. . . 'reasoned high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
And found no end in wandering mazes lost.'

Thus reasoned devils. But not so Jesus. How does He treat of Providence? He would not muddle a philosopher nor confuse a child. Con-

sider the lilies of the field. If God so clothe the grass of the field, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? If God cares for the least, shall He not care for you? It is as clear as our electric light.

"Concerning foreknowledge He asserted: 'Before Abraham was, I am.' 'Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him!' It is luminous as a star.

"Concerning free-will He said: 'If any man wills to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine. If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me and drink. He that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' And the beloved disciple truly represented Him when He said, 'Whosoever will, may come and take of the water of life freely.' Bright as the sun.

"Concerning fate, He clearly linked conduct with destiny, and showed that character determines condition—sheep on the right, goats on the left, and these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life.

"There is one subject that has perplexed and tested the thought of all ages and all nations. It is sin. It covers the race and pertains to every man. It rests like a nightmare on the conscience since we turned our backs to the flaming sword at the closed gates of Eden. How shall it be gotten rid of? All men of all tribes, ages, and conditions have stood upon the hilltops and

darkened the pure heavens with the smoke of their sacrifices; they have given even their first-born, the fruit of their bodies, for the sin of their souls. The rude Hottentot despairs of propitiation by any means known to himself, and the ambitious Lady Macbeth equally despairs: 'All the perfumes of Araby will not sweeten this little hand.'

'Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hands? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green our red.'

"But the whole question of sin has no puzzles to Jesus. All is as clear as a debt that has been paid, a sickness that has been healed. During His early ministry He said, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' as naturally as He would say, Here is your morning meal. He did not put the conditions in metaphysical abstrucities nor impossible sacrifices. The debt had been paid. He paid it Himself. To realize that blessed discharge, and act accordingly, required only faith on the part of the debtor. No wonder the weighted debtor, staring the prison in the face till he should pay the uttermost farthing, thus freely discharged, leaped for gladness and shouted for joy."

Jesus is the supreme and final Teacher of the method of restoring men to the lost favor and likeness of God. Man was created in the image of God, in "knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness." That this image has been badly defaced in mankind goes without question. God is perfect; man is a sinner—is out of harmony with

God. Jesus alone has told us how the lost harmony between sinful man and a holy God may be restored and the marred image repaired. "The son of Man came not," Jesus said, "to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." Again He said, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." He takes the lost sinner who, in all his guilt and helplessness, cries to Him, makes him a new creature and restores to him the favor and image of God. Christ's mode of salvation is clearly illustrated in a conversation of a group of Chinamen overheard by a missionary. One of them said: "Chinaman was down in a deep pit and wanted help to get out. Confucius came and said: 'If you had only kept my precepts, you would not have fallen in.' Buddha came to the mouth of the pit and said: 'Ah, poor fellow, if you were only up here where I am, I would make all right.' Chinaman replied: 'If I were where you are, I would not need your help.' Then Jesus came along with tears in His eyes and jumped right into the pit and lifted the poor man right out of it." This is the plan of salvation taught by Jesus. It lifts the sinful penitent out of the darkness and death of sin into the light of life, and gives him the saving knowledge of God. "Whosoever goeth on and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son."

The claim which Christianity makes for Jesus that He was "God manifested in the flesh" is

one which no other religion makes for its founder and teacher. "Confucius is represented merely as a sage; Zoroaster and Mohammed only as prophets. Buddha alone can be set over against Christ as one deemed by his followers both God and man. But what a contrast! Do not these two great solitary figures rise up before us, as if to show how vast is the distance between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man? Christ—the God-man—God in infinite love and condescension taking upon Himself human nature and becoming a human brother: Buddha—the man-God—with vain and presumptuous boast of having raised himself to Godhead by his own power and knowledge. Christ revealing the Father; Buddha proclaiming that there is no Father, and that all existence is evil and vanity. Christ bringing life and immortality to light: Buddha setting forth only nothingness."

Jesus never swerved a hairsbreadth from His appointed work. He did it meekly, faithfully, efficiently. He never taught nor worked for mere effect, nor for personal display. "If I honor myself," He said, "My honor is nothing. I came, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."

No man ever finished his work. In every life there is some work left undone, something left unfinished.

"Labor with what zeal we will,
 Something still remains undone,
 Something uncompleted still
 Waits the rising of the sun."

Of John the Baptizer, it was said—and this is the highest eulogy ever pronounced upon any man—that he “fulfilled his course.” History records but one perfect life and in that life the solitary example of finished work. At the close of His earthly ministry, lifting up His eyes to heaven, Jesus said, “I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. Father, I have glorified Thee.”

Though Jesus never honored Himself nor showed the least inkling of vanity, the center and soul of His teaching, as was befitting, was Himself. “This was the secret of His ministry. He Himself was the central word of His own preaching. He offered Himself to the world as the solution of its difficulties, and the source of a new life. He asked men simply to believe in Him, to love Him, to follow Him.” Jesus has life in Himself and power to infuse life into every one that believes on Him. “The Scriptures,” He said, “testify of Me. He that believeth on Me hath eternal life.”

Christ is the center, and source, and Lord of all being. Nature, when read in her true light, declares Him. He is the Rock of Ages; the Lion of the tribe of Juda; the Rose of Sharon; the Plant of Renown; the Bright and Morning Star; the Son of Righteousness. He is the Father of eternity; by Him all things were made; in Him all things consist, and move, and live. Holy Scripture, in type and shadow, in song and prophecy, in memorial and history, testifies of Him. The things that are made and the Written Word, both point to Christ, the Living Word. Let us learn at the feet of the Great Teacher. “Learn

of Me," says Jesus, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."

The words of Jesus are brimming full of spirit and life. His thoughts are seed thoughts and eternal thoughts. They live and develop while the ages come and go, and while most that the ages produce goes with them into the oblivious past. "The observation and study of fifty years," says Sir William Dawson, "have shown me the rise and fall of several systems of philosophy and criticism, and the Word of God still abides."

"Forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in Heaven." This is the Word which, in the glorious gospel of Christ is proclaimed to the world. It is "the Word of Life," and enshrines the truth taught by Jesus to the "sons of men." It is the salt of the earth. "The gospel in various dresses—Greek, Catholic, and Protestant—is still for four hundred million human beings, the spiritual organ, the great pair of pinions, indispensable for lifting man above himself, above his groveling life, and his narrow horizon, to lead him through penitence, resignation, and hope to serenity; to carry him far above intemperance by purity and loving kindness, even to devoted self-sacrifice.

"At all times and everywhere for eighteen centuries, so soon as these pinions begin to fail or are broken, public and private morals sink. Neither philosophic reason, nor artistic culture, nor even honor—no code, administration, nor government, suffices to take its place. It is the only thing that can hold us back from the fatal downgrade by which, incessantly and with all its

original weight, our race sinks into the depths."

No one has ever come, and we have no hope that anyone will ever come, to reveal God by a more tender name than that of Father, or to propose a higher motive for obedience than that of purity and love. "Almost any system of religion or morals can tell a man what he ought to do. Only Christianity makes a man what he ought to be."

"The law lays its hand upon a man's shoulder and says, 'You shall not do wrong,' The gospel lays its hand upon his heart and says, 'You shall not want to do wrong.' This is the only effectual cure. No law, however stringent; no government, however strong and resolute; no police, however numerous and vigilant, can protect us from the evils that beset us, so long as the heart of man remains unchanged; for the heart is the fountain from which these bitter waters flow. The law of the Old Testament was given to prepare for the love of the new, and all our legal and governmental devices are vain unless the Gospel is brought to bear upon the lives of men."

Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ; He made known the plan of salvation and solved the problem of sin; He abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; He manifested the kindness of God our Savior, and His love toward man. "Let a man once get his feet on the foundation," says George Matheson, "let him once stand on the all transcending truth of the gospel, he will find it to be an all-comprehending truth. It will throw light upon everything."

THE CROSS

For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.

—Collossians 1:19, 20.

All law is benevolence [love] acting by rule.
—Edmond Burke.

God's Justice and Love are one. Infinite Justice must be infinite Love. Justice is but another sign for Love.

—F. W. Robertson.

How Christ's death takes away thy sins thou shalt never know on earth—perhaps not in heaven. It is a mystery which thou must believe and adore. But why he died thou canst see at the first glance, if thou hast a human heart and wilt look at what God means thee to look at—Christ upon His Cross. He died because He was Love,—love itself, love boundless, unconquerable, unchangeable—love which inhabits eternity, and therefore could not be hardened nor foiled by any sin or rebellion of man, but must love men still—must go out to seek and save them, must dare suffer any misery, shame, death itself for their sake—just because it is absolute and perfect Love which inhabits eternity.

—Charles Kingsley.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee.
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

—George Matheson.

XV

THE CROSS

With uncovered heads, in penitence and silence, with awe and wonder, we approach "The Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." We behold in it the shame and exceeding sinfulness of sin; the worth and dignity of man; the height, and depth, and breadth of God's love. The Cross of Christ stands against the dark background of history a solitary picture, touched with the brightest lights and shaded with the darkest hues. It stands evermore in the universe as the special manifestation and the most glorious memorial of the power, the wisdom and the love of God. Upon the Cross Jesus Christ made an offering of Himself "once for all;" and "when He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down on the right hand of God." He is a priest "who hath been made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an indissoluble life." Called of God and appointed a High Priest, after the order of Melchizedek, "by the word of the oath He is consecrated for evermore."

Of Crucifixion Cicero says, "It is the most cruel and shameful of all punishments. Let it never come near the body of a Roman citizen, nay, not even near his thoughts, nor eyes, nor ears." As death upon the cross was, among the Romans, a mode of capital punishment inflicted upon slaves and malefactors, it was naturally

an object of popular abhorrence and disgust, of the deepest shame and infamy. In these facts are found, in part, the reason why the cross came to be the instrument of our Savior's death. He died for a race of slaves to sin and malefactors against God. He submitted Himself to become an object of popular scorn and derision that He might lift man up out of the shame and infamy of sin. As Jesus made His advent into the world in the humblest part of the humble khan in little Bethlehem, so He made His exit by a mode of death, the most ignominious in the Roman world. He humbled Himself that the most lowly might become exalted. He bore our sicknesses and carried our sorrows; yet men considered "Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."

Before time was, the place and conditions of our Lord's birth were arranged, His words and works were assigned Him, and the mode of His death was determined. A glance into the history of the period in which Jesus lived will show how marvelously the relations existing between the Jews and the Romans conspired to bring about the crucifixion. When all the conditions are taken into the account, and the items in the mode of death upon the cross are considered, the discerning eye cannot fail to see above the scenes of the unique tragedy the directing finger of God. From the strained relations existing at the

time between the sons of Israel and their stern masters, no other mode of death was legally possible. The enemies of Jesus had no alternative as to the mode of death. There was but one way open to them. That they eagerly accepted and, releasing a murderer in preference to Jesus, they crucified the Lord's Anointed—the Divinely appointed Offering without spot or blemish, for the sin of the whole world.

Paul preached Christ crucified, to the Jew a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them who are saved the power of God and the wisdom of God. Not only in the great plan of redemption, but even in the items of the crucifixion may be discerned the power and wisdom of God. In God's plans and works there are no trifles. Every event and every condition is significant and fits into its proper place. Hence every incident of the crucifixion has its place and meaning.

Sin is the great scourage of the children of men. Every back bends sooner or later, more or less, under its merciless loss. Scourging, being the preparatory step for crucifixion, was inflicted upon Jesus, and the sensitive flesh of His bared back quivered under the cruel thongs. Sin has pierced our feet, thereby crippling our movements; it has pierced our hands, thus restraining and marring our work; it has pierced every heart, perverting the affections and the emotions; and with mockery and desecration of the intellectual dignity of men, it has crowned every brow with thorns.

He who knew no sin offered up Himself a sin-offering for us, and "carried up our sins in His own body on the tree," in order that we, having died unto sin, might live unto righteousness. A soldier, one of the fruits of sin, drove the cruel nails through His hands and feet, and a soldier, with a spear forged by sin, pierced His side. Necessity gave Him the most lowly apartment of the Khan for His birthplace, and a stone manger for a cradle; and when He was about to go out of the world and enter into His glory, the Roman soldiers, representing the world spirit and power, placed upon His brow, not a wreath of laurel nor a coronet of gems and gold, but a crown of thorns. Thus from His hands, His feet, His side, and His brow flowed down the precious blood, shed for the sin of the world, that whosoever believeth on His name might be delivered from the thralldom of sin and with new life enter into "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Truly, every incident connected with the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ was significant. No other mode of death conceivable would have been expressive and appropriate, even in a few particulars, while in that of the cross, every item is significant, and when all the parts are put together, it forms a tragedy that points to a directing Will above the plans and purposes of earthly powers, and elicits the love and wonder of angels and of the wise and good among men.

As if to intensify the indignity of His death on the Cross they crucified Jesus between two

malefactors, one of whom through penitence and confession became an example for the penitent, and the other in his unbelief, a representative of the impenitent, among men. A vast multitude were eye-witnesses of the crucifixion. Chief priests, and scribes, and elders were there; Jews from every nation under heaven, proselytes and Roman soldiers—a living, seething sea of passion, rolling up its waves of malice and contempt, of hatred and fear against their innocent victim. They reviled and mocked Him. Those who passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads. The temptation to save Himself and win the faith of the nation by a display of supernatural power for His own advantage—a temptation with which the arch-enemy had pursued Him from the beginning of His ministry—was repeatedly, in those hours of suffering, thrust into His face by the chief priests, and the elders, and the people.

But Jesus, ruling His own spirit throughout the unparalleled tumult remained unmoved in His purpose. Of all the vast multitude He alone continued calm, serene, and self-possessed. Under the envy and malice, hatred and contempt of that hour of the powers of darkness was concealed a feeling of fear and dread, and when the sun failed to shine, leaving the tragic scene in darkness, while the earth quaked and the rocks rent asunder, "all the people who came together to that sight, beholding the things that were done, smote on their breasts and returned." In spite of their efforts to stifle the sense of right and

wrong, and of their expressions of contempt and ridicule, conscience made cowards of them all. Jesus, even while nailed to the cross, was Master of the assembly and Lord of all.

During the hours of suffering on the cross, as the period of His passion was a time of comparative silence, our Lord probably said but few words. Only seven utterances have been preserved by the evangelists. Through these, as through seven windows, we may look into His mind and heart, and learn the impressions made upon Him by the passing events of the hour. They show that He retained the serenity and dignity maintained during His trial, and "exhibit all those qualities in their full exercise which had already made His name illustrious." He triumphed over the sufferings of the cross, "not through the cold serenity of the stoic, but through self-forgetting love." He looked with pity and forgiving love upon His enemies and executioners, breathing a prayer for them in the first recorded utterance:

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Scourging and thorns, mockery and insult fail to ruffle His temper or chill the ardor of His love. While the nails are tearing the quivering flesh, the pain and anguish are soothed in the tide of His love. Looking up to the Father, He prays for them who are taking His life.

In the narrative of the dark event there is given one bright little episode that must have been like a refreshing shower on the parched

ground to the soul of Jesus, thirsting for sympathy, and always using His time in doing good. When one of the malefactors joined in the mockery of the chief priests and the people, the other, "rebuking him, said, dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." After giving this evidence of penitence and faith, he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom." In love and compassion his Lord replied:

Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.

Here we have one of those flashes of light which Jesus now and then threw upon the unseen world. In the ancient Orient the word Paradise stood for all that nature and art could furnish of beauty and loveliness in landscape. This word, therefore, standing for the highest rural beauty, was applied by our Lord to the realm where those who receive Him go to abide when life's transient pilgrimage is over. Jesus here, as elsewhere, when speaking of the world to come, makes no reference to special location. St. Paul, in his use of the word applies it to the third heaven. St. John, speaking of the tree of life, says, "it is in the midst of the Paradise of God." The word seems to be used in the Bible indefinitely for a place of beauty and blessedness, and may, therefore, designate any part of our Father's House which has many mansions and is commensurate with the unseen universe, including the seen.

This word to the penitent thief teaches that the dead who die in the Lord—dead to us, alive to the Lord—enter the eternal mansions when their earthly tabernacles are dissolved. This was the teaching of St. Paul, the great expositor of Christian doctrine, and it was the belief of the primitive Christians, as is seen on the tombs of their beloved dead, of which the following is an example: "In peace. Alexander is not dead, but lives beyond the stars, and his body rests in this tomb."

"All his acquaintance and the women that followed with Him from Galilee stood afar off, beholding these things." These helpless, disheartened friends timidly watched the inexplicable tragedy and shared their sympathy with the sufferer. From these friends four of the most devoted, during the early part of the crucifixion, drew near to the cross. "When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother:"

Woman, behold thy Son. Then saith He to the disciple, *Behold thy mother.*

Losing sight of His own suffering, He bears on His heart His bereaved mother and commends her to the guardianship of the beloved disciple, who from that hour took her to his own home in Jerusalem. Thongs, and thorns, and the impaling nails, with mockery, and insult, fail to produce one stoical or different impulse in the heart of the Son of Mary.

After these utterances, "the sun's light failing, there was darkness over the whole land"

from mid-day till three o'clock. Jesus *felt* as though the light of the Father's presence was also withdrawn—though darkness as well as light is the dwelling-place of God—and for three hours He hung on the cross, with “none to take pity, none to help, and no comforters.” Alone he bore our sins on the tree “when His soul was made a guilt-offering for sin.” Not only did the world's sin in its epitome, seen in the seething mass of men near Him, “press itself upon His loving, holy soul: it came from afar—from the past, the distant, and the future—and met in Him.” Thus in living a life of perfect obedience and enduring all the suffering of a world of sin, thereby magnifying the law and making it honorable, so that grace reigns through righteousness, Jesus became a perfect Savior.

Finally at the ninth hour, the moment of slaying the passover lamb in the temple, while the darkness without was passing from the landscape, and the darkness within was fading from His soul, while He was coming up out of the depths of anguish that human thought will never fathom, He uttered the startling cry:

My God, My God! why didst Thou forsake Me!

A thousand years had passed since this cry issued from the soul of the sweet psalmist, prophet, and king of Israel, whose Son and Lord now felt the force and depth of its meaning. The words of this cry are the “opening verses of a psalm that foretells the sufferings, the wrongs, the triumphs of the crucified Christ Jesus, and as a few notes recall the whole of

an anthem, so these words recall the whole of the twenty-second psalm. Therein the prophet is so moved by the Holy Spirit that he is at one with the Savior Crucified." This psalm and the sixty-ninth, from which the cry, "I thirst," is taken, vividly describe "the shame, the suffering, the resignation, the triumphant assurance, and the blessedness of the dying Redeemer." These psalms, if not audibly repeated on the cross, dwelt in the mind and heart of Jesus and helped to sustain Him during those hours of suffering. Both psalms open with expressions of soul-anguish, breathe a spirit of confession and praise, submission and assurance of union with God, and close with notes of triumph.

So overwhelming was the inner suffering of the dying Redeemer, caused by the pressure of the world's sin, that the physical pain was not heeded until after the cry of relief was uttered and the Spirit of the Divine Sufferer emerged from its deep eclipse. Immediately after this "Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, saith,"

I thirst.

This was said, not only to make known a bodily need, but also to fulfill one of the Scriptures that were ever dear to His heart, and that He had declared "cannot be broken."

We see in Him to the last His characteristic self-possession and presence of mind. "From the first day to the last," said Napoleon at St. Helena, "He is the same, always the same, majestic and simple; infinitely firm and infinitely gentle."

The final moment has come. His work has been finished; the ordeal has been passed; the battle has been fought and the foe vanquished; eternal life for man has been secured; and now, in the strength of victory won in the final struggle, Jesus cried with a loud voice:

It is finished.

Having finished His work and completed that

“Strange conquest where the conqueror must die,
And he is slain that wins the victory,”

He then, of His own will, breathed out His life on a verse of the thirty-first psalm:

Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit.

While these confiding words were passing from His lips “He bowed His head and gave up His Spirit.” The death of Jesus was not a disaster but “His supreme act of redeeming sacrifice.”

In death, as in life, Jesus leaned on the Father. God is in all, through all, above all; infinitely great and wise and good. The only begotten Son of the Father came into our world, not to reveal the architecture of heaven, nor to bring within the circle of mortal vision the beauty of the unseen world, but to make known to men the goodness of God. Jesus has come and gone to leave everywhere in our world His effluence—the goodness and beauty of the Lord. The intellect may be satisfied with Absolute Being; the will may worship the Almighty One; the heart of man will cleave ever to the good, loving, lovable God.

The problem of evil has from time immemorial perplexed the thought of the greatest minds. What is evil? What good purpose can it serve? How can man be delivered from its direful consequences? Philosophy has found no solution. Love alone is found supreme. Love faces the intricate problem—love compassionate, love self-denying, love self-sacrificing. It beholds suffering as essential, in a revelation of God, to the perfection of the Divine excellence. It sees Divine sacrifice as alone adequate to the removal of the awful blight of sin. A voice of human need cries up to God for help, and a voice of Divine love answers back to man: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

In a perfect government pardon is impossible unless there be a substitute, one who can make a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. Only thus could the law be made or declared honorable while God remained just and at the same time the justifier of the ungodly who accept His offered mercy.

"Pardon," says Justice David J. Brewer, "is not a judicial function, but in the great tribunal of eternity the same Being is both Judge and Chief Executive. And as we cannot sound the depths of infinite wisdom, so we may not measure the reach of infinite love. . . .

Doubtless there is wisdom in the provision that the finite judge who is called upon to declare the law shall not be given power to dispense with it; that that power shall not be exercised until after condemnation, and then by other than the judge. Does the wisdom, and therefore the necessity, of this separation inhere in the nature of things? Does it not rather spring from the fact that the power to grant the one may lead the judge to ignore the other, and so the public be gradually deadened to a sense of the danger as well as the wickedness of the crime? But with infinite wisdom in the Judge pardon is safe left with Him. He will wisely determine its conditions and never toss it out as a free gift to every criminal. He will never cast pearls before swine, and never so act that it blots out the sense of guilt. The same lips that declared, 'Like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him,' also declared, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' Justice and Mercy are alike the handmaids of the Omnipotent. Not inaccurately did the great apostle, himself a lawyer brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, declare, 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.' So out of my judicial experience, and looking through the glass of my lifework, I have learned to see in the Cross the visible symbol of faultless justice, and in the resurrection of Christ the prophecy and truth of its final triumph."

In the temple on Mount Moria hung the skillfully wrought veil that concealed from every eye, except that of the high-priest on the day

of atonement, the Holy of Holies, the earthly dwelling-place of Jehovah, and symbol of His Holy Dwelling-place in heaven. While this veil, the type of Christ's humanity, remained whole the way into the Most Holy Place of "the True Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man," was closed. To open this closed way Christ died. When the loud cry, *It is finished*, rang out in the air of Jerusalem, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom," and admission into the presence of God was made possible to the most lowly penitent. Having now a High-Priest who has passed through the heavens into heaven itself, we are invited to enter, without priest or sacrifice, into the Most Holy place of the True Tabernacle, and to "draw near with boldness to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help us in time of need."

These privileges and blessings, growing out of the death of Christ, naturally, as time moved on, associated with the figure of the Cross on which He suffered the graces of His character and the power of His death and resurrection. From a repulsive object, therefore, stained with all that was vile and criminal, the cross became in the minds of Christians the symbol of all that is holy and precious. As the crucified, risen Christ is the power of God unto salvation, those who experienced this power, instinctively gloried in the cross as the instrument on which was procured for them blessings so great. In itself the figure of the cross is an empty thing,

but since it stands for that on which the Divinely appointed Sacrifice was made for the world's sin, and on which the justice and love of God were revealed, it stands evermore as the symbol of human redemption and Divine manifestation. In this light it was viewed and used by the primitive Christians, and hence it was associated in their minds, not with gloomy and ascetic feelings, but with hopeful and joyous emotions. On the tombs of the disciples in the catacombs of Rome, therefore, the cross was the emblem of victory and hope. Often the cross and the word victory were carved together on the same tomb. Maitland, in his *Work on the catacombs*, says: "When the cross was employed as an emblem, as it very often was, it wore a cheerful aspect. Pilate may set a seal upon the sepulchre, and the soldiers may repeat their idle tale, but the church knows better; and thinking rather of Christ's resurrection than of His death, she crowns the Cross with flowers."

At dawn on the morning of the third day after the crucifixion an angel from heaven broke the seal of the state and rolled aside the stone door of Joseph's new sepulchre, and He who gave up His life and died on the cross came forth living, and He is alive for evermore. Here we have the sequel and the wonderful power of the cross. The remembrance of the meek, patient, forgiving Sufferer could never have changed the repulsive cross into a symbol of Life, Light, and Love if the grave had held

His pierced body. The sufferings on the cross would have been abortive and useless. Death would have continued to reign over the earth under a sky darkened with fear and despair.

But God did not suffer His Holy One to see corruption. The power that Jesus used in yielding up His living body to death, a sacrifice for sin, He also used in raising up His dead body alive from the tomb; and so overflowing was that power that the tombs in the vicinity of Jerusalem opened and "many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and, coming forth out of the tombs after His resurrection, they entered into the Holy City and appeared unto many."

The power of Christ, so meekly and gently exerted during the trial and the crucifixion, culminated in the resurrection and gave fullness and force to all that was finished on the cross. The hopes of the disciples died with their Master on the cross and were buried with Him in the tomb, but when He arose from the dead and appeared among them alive in the body that had been crucified, their hopes revived and they, endowed with new life and power, went forth "preaching Christ and the resurrection." Through that preaching the world was revolutionized, the personal dignity and rights of the individual grew into recognition; new nations with new life were born out of the waning kingdoms and restless clans of the old world; and the course of human development was turned into new channels, leading to a higher and better civilization.

"From Christ's grave," says Professor Harnack, "has sprung the indestructible faith in the overthrow of death and in an eternal life." When the Crucified Redeemer came forth, victorious over death, out of the new tomb of Joseph, a dark cloud hung over the world of the dead. Those who entered the grave left hope behind. The inscriptions on the tombs were expressions of sorrow, complaint, and despair. In some cases they were flippant, in other impious. A common Roman name for the grave was "the eternal home," and death was, "an eternal sleep." These terms, however, could not long survive in the atmosphere of the life and immortality brought to light through the preaching of the gospel of Christ. "In the dawning of Christian hope on that heathen empire, and with faith burning bright in their bosoms, they could no longer look upon the grave with despair, nor apply to it names of gloomy association. Not satisfied with the Latin word *sepulcrum*, which meant only a place of burial, they employed in its place one of the sweetest and most pleasant words that language afforded; and from that time until now the place where Christ's beloved followers are buried is called a cemetery—a Place of Sleep."

Among the Primitive Christians, when the bodies of their beloved dead were laid away in the "Place of Sleep," over their last resting places were carved sweet inscriptions, full of hope: "Laid here to sleep;" "Sleeps in peace;" "Sleeps in Christ;" "In peace;" "In Christ;" "Sleeps,

will rise;" "Here lies Paulina in the place of the blessed." In these sweet words are seen the beautiful faith and the blessed hope of the early Christians. The power of the cross had lifted the dark cloud that hung over the grave and had illuminated it with the light and joy of a well grounded hope that was anchored within the Most Holy Place of the true Tabernacle in heaven.

We have seen *why* Jesus came into our world, and in it lived and died. He was moved by love. He "so" loved the children of men, that He gave Himself—His own life for the forfeited life of humanity. Now let us try to see *how* and *when* He made possible the restoration of our forfeited life.

When John saw Jesus, after His baptism and temptation, coming unto him he said to his disciples who were standing by, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

When and how did Jesus take upon Himself the world's sin? He claimed throughout His earthly ministry to be the Son of God and the Savior of men; yet, in His trial before Caiaphas and before Pilate, though all the Powers of heaven were ready to move at His call, He made no defence. Caiaphas represented the Jews, and Pilate the Gentiles—one stood for the civic, the other for the ecclesiastical world. Caiaphas and the Jewish council found Him "guilty of death," on the charge of blasphemy, and Pilate condemned Him to be crucified because, as was alleged, He claimed to be a king. Thus and

then, in their rejection and condemnation of Jesus the world incurred the sin of *rejecting* God's Anointed—a sin including all sins.

As He possessed all knowledge and all power in heaven and in earth, Jesus must have considered carefully and well the rapidly moving facts of His trial. The great problem in the case for Him to solve was this: "Shall I vindicate Myself, prove My innocence and power, escape death upon the cross, and let men perish in their sins; or shall I submit to this miscarriage of justice, take upon Myself the world's sin, and thus save men from sin and death?" Love prevailed. Love was again supreme. Yes, love had solved the problem in eternity before the primordial elements of the universe were made. Jesus submitted to His *rejection*—He accepted the unjust sentence of condemnation, carried up the sin of the world upon the Cross, and died in reproach and shame, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." Consequently "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." He drank, without protest, the cup of rejection and condemnation, and thus secured by bearing its sin, "in His own body upon the tree," the world's Redemption.

However, after all has been said, the power of Jesus to save us from our sins is what Redemption means to us, and as life is more than biology and light more than optics, so Redemption means more than all our theories and explanations of it.

Through faith in Christ crucified is obtained salvation, with peace, joy, and hope. There is no other name given under heaven, among men, in which we can be saved. No other name has been put forth with a claim to the possession of saving power. A Brahman once said to a missionary: "I find many things in Christianity that I find also in Brahmanism, but there is one thing in Christianity that I do not find in Brahmanism." "What is that?" asked the missionary. "A Savior," replied the Brahman. This is the glory of Christianity, that which distinguishes it in a special way from all humanly devised systems of religion. The idea of salvation from sin runs through its entire structure. An angel of the Lord, before the Savior's birth, appeared in a dream to Joseph of Nazareth, saying, "Thou shalt call His name *Jesus*, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins." In the fullness of time Christ crucified became to all them that obey Him the Author of eternal salvation. "Having an unchangeable priesthood, he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

On the Cross Christ was both sacrifice and priest. He offered Himself a ransom for enslaved humanity. He laid down His own life for our forfeited life. God's law had been broken. Man in breaking the law forfeited His life. Justice demanded the enforcement of the law. God, in His mercy, planned other means of right-

ing the wrong, and still keeping the law honorable. Love, injured, settled the terms and determined the cost. Love, dispensing justice, accepted the price. Love, of which justice is a sign and evidence, was thus satisfied. Justice is love acting by rule and equity, and so justice was also satisfied.

“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea,
There’s a kindness in His justice,
Which is more than liberty.”

According, therefore, to the Divine order, or plan of equitable adjustment, Jesus Christ, “through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without blemish unto God.” Thus through His own blood He entered in once for all into Heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us, having obtained eternal redemption. Jesus Christ, having lived a life of perfect obedience, made available the law of the Cross—which demands the shedding of blood for the remission of sins—by shedding thereon the precious blood of His own spotless life for the condemned life of the disobedient; thereby satisfying the law of perfect obedience and making it honorable, so that God can evermore be just in pardoning and justifying, and endowing with eternal life every one who believes on Jesus, and leads a new life of loving obedience.

On the Cross we behold the Man, the one true Cosmopolitan, who “carries the world in His heart,” and manifests “the love of God that pass-

es knowledge." "We see in the Risen Christ the end for which man was made."

The law in the formula, "Apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission," like the law of gravitation, is in its nature inscrutable. Both laws have the seal of God upon them. The Lord creating and the Lord redeeming are One. All things were made by Him who in our world became the Author of redemption. Christ is Lord of all being. In Him the Kingdom of Nature and the Reign of Grace form one living, evolving universe, for "in Him all things consist," and move, and work. It is not a surprise, therefore, to find that in nature, as well as in the reign of grace through righteousness, there are vicarious laws ever directing and controlling her working forces.

On the material side of the universe the law of vicarious work and suffering may be seen in almost any direction we may choose to look. It is seen running through the records of the deep past, as made known in geology. Rocks were disintegrated to make soil for the plant, and the plant lived and matured to die for the animal. Vast forests flourished to be buried and transformed into coal that we now convert into heat and light for our dwellings and power for our machinery. Whole tribes of animals perished, as their environment improved, to give place to others of higher orders. Thus step by step, cycle succeeding cycle, the preparatory making way for higher conditions and then passing away, the world finally came to be as we find it in our day.

The old forces, either active or latent, still persist. The seed perishes that the plant may grow, and the ovule dies that the animal may live. Many plants and animals die in the work of producing seeds and ovules for the propagation of their species. The vegetable world works the materials of the mineral world into foods and perishes to support the life of the animal world. Spring rises out of the death of Winter, harvest grows out of the waste of seedtime, and the fading blossom gives place to the growing fruit. Fuel is consumed in the production of heat and light, heat and light die out in their transformation into power, and power dies in producing motion. Even in our bodies life persists through the death of their constituent elements, which are removed by physiological processes, and give place to newly vitalized materials supplied by proper vital forces. Whenever this process is interfered with health is impaired, and should it cease for a moment death would instantly follow.

Rising into the intellectual sphere we find there also our old persistent law. The life of ease and pleasure must yield to toil and discipline for the attainment of scholarship and mental culture, and for efficiency in high position. In the still higher sphere of the spiritual, we must die to a life of sin and become crucified to all that is ungodly and lustful in the world, in order to live unto God and enjoy His presence and love.

Thus we find that almost everywhere "the

path of life is through the gateways of death."

When man, made in the image of God, and therefore endowed with personality and responsibility, fell through disobedience from his primal state of righteousness and true holiness, the Creator, as nothing created could stand as substitute for man in his sin, clothed Himself in human form and flesh, and "being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." The Eternal Word became man and lived a human life. Divesting Himself of "His eternal glory," He appeared in our world in the form of helpless infancy, subjected Himself to the trials, temptations, and hardships common to the life of men, and finally carried up the sin of the world in His own body upon the tree and died the most shameful of all deaths that God, in pardoning them who repent and believe, might maintain that eternal justice which is required by His own absolute and perfect love. He thus caused "grace to reign through righteousness." Men can now become reconciled to God, and by "dying to sin live unto righteousness" and obtain eternal redemption. Herein is revealed the Supreme Work of the Creator—that for which all His other works were preparatory toward which they all were directed, and without which they would not have been.

Christ Jesus is "God manifested in the flesh, the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visi-

ble and things invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through Him and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." In Christ Crucified then, is found the solution of the problem of the universe as well as the cause of its existence; for it is the Divine purpose, "in the fullness of the times to *sum up* all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth." The Cross, therefore, stands upon the summit of the universe—"the Temple shrine of the Eternal God"—and is the Supreme manifestation of Deity in space and time. In the Cross we behold clearly revealed the power and wisdom, the unselfishness and the unchangeable love of God. "Here opens in cloudless glory the Being of God in contrast with the nature of man. God gives up all for others. Self-moved, He makes satisfaction to His own sense of justice and relieves misery by expiating guilt." "Herein," says St. John, "is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent His only begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

As love moved God to create, so love moved Him to redeem. Behind the death of Christ was "the suffering and redeeming love of God." Not to appease God's anger, but to show His love was Jesus lifted up on the Cross. The record does not say God was so angry with the world, but "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son;" nor does it say God was

reconciling Himself to the world, but "God was in Christ reconciling the World unto Himself." The death of Christ "supremely attests the all-embracing and invincible love of God." "At the heart of the death of Christ" lies this message:

"O heart I made, a heart beats here!
Face My hands fashioned, see it in Myself!
Thou hast no power, nor may'st conceive of Mine,
But love I gave thee, with Myself to love.
And thou must love Me, who have died for thee!"

"Nothing," says William Harris, "reveals character more than self-sacrifice. So the highest knowledge we have of God is through the gift of His Son." That "unspeakable gift" declared the unalloyed, unchangeable good-will of the Eternal Father. "Whatever may be the mysteries of life and death," says Charles Kingsley, "there is one mystery which the Cross of Christ reveals to us, and that is the absolute and infinite goodness of God." As the beauty of a ray of light is unseen till broken by the drops of rain and the rainbow thrown upon the fading clouds, so the tenderness and beauty, and joy of God's love are not seen in their fullness and perfection until reflected from the Cross upon the dark background of sinful humanity. "Eternity is God's lifetime." Through all His lifetime God's love flows unchangeable and boundless. This truth is supremely attested in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Of the Cross in consideration of any recurrence of a similar event Robert Hall said, "We have not the least reason to suppose that any

similar transaction has occurred on the theater of the universe, or will ever again in the annals of eternity. It stands amid the lapse of ages and the waste of worlds a single and solitary monument." As it is appointed unto men once to die, so Christ offered Himself once upon the Cross and then sat down upon the throne of the universe to reign forever. "I am," said the voice heard by John on the isle called Patmos, "the first and the last, and the Living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades."

"The Cross of Christ," says F. W. Upham, "is the center of the manifestation of the Godhead, holding it all in one; and there dwells in it that spiritual attraction of which Christ spoke when signifying what death He should die, He said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all unto Me." Man, dead in trespasses and sins, looks on His Cross and lives. By the expiation on the Cross there is remission of sins. But if we would dare so to do, in vain we try to look through the mystery of Godliness, the center, and depth, and height of which is the Cross. At the Cross of Christ knowledge finds her life in losing it, in rising from knowledge into adoration.

"The Cross of Christ may well be thought of as a timeless fact, rather than as in the four thousandth year of History. Chronologically its place is there, but logically it is before time was. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of

the world; and for Him all things were made. The Cross is not consequent upon man. The Cross of Christ is the reason for all that is not eternal, for all that exists in birth and change. It is corner stone and keystone of the universe."

In the Cross, therefore, the manifestation of the Beauty of the Lord reaches its culmination, making it for evermore the center of the thought and the adoration of all worlds. The prophets of old sought diligently "what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them." The angels with bowed heads "desire to look into these things." After Christ had suffered and entered into His glory St. John saw hundreds of millions of angels round about the throne in Heaven, and heard them "saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

The Glory consequent upon the death of Christ sustained Him in the unfathomable sufferings through which He passed during His passion. "For the joy that was set before Him He endured the Cross, despising the shame."

The power and glory of the Cross are manifested in this life in the salvation of those who believe, enabling them to "rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory." When the seed time of this world is over and the earth is commanded to bring forth the dissolved bodies,

once endowed with life, which have mingled with her dust, the power and glory of the Cross will then shine out in the redemption of spirit, soul, and body, and the redeemed of the Lord, looking to the Cross through eternity as here on earth, will join in the song of redemption: "Unto Him who loveth us, and who cleansed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us a kingdom and priests unto His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the Dominion for ever and ever."

Because of the agony in Gethsemane and the sufferings on the Cross Christ Jesus is crowned Lord of all for evermore. "His death stands for ever as the great event of time, and the life out of that death stands for ever and ever as the marvel, the memorial, and the adoration of the universe."

“LOOKING UNTO JESUS”

We all with unveiled face, reflecting as a mirror the Glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.

—2 Corinthians 3:18.

Christ came not so much to make a revelation of truth by His own words, as to be a Revelation of Truth in His own Person.

—Whately.

It is the grandeur of Christ's character which constitutes the chief power of His ministry, not His works nor teachings apart from His character. The greatest triumph of the gospel is Christ Himself—a human body become the organ of the Divine Nature, and revealing under the conditions of an earthly life, the glory of God.

—Horace Bushnell.

If you will let Jesus walk with you in your streets, sit with you in your offices, and be with you in your homes, and teach you in your churches, and abide with you as a living presence in your hearts, you, too, shall know what freedom is, and while you do your duties, be above your duties; and while you own yourselves the sons of men, know you are the sons of God.

—Phillips Brooks.

XVI

“LOOKING UNTO JESUS”

“Talk not,” said Agassiz, “of light, of gravitation, of evolution—these are pens in an unseen hand. Talk of the hand—God’s hand—that holds them.” God’s hand makes and holds all things. To minds enlightened “with wisdom from on high” the things that are made declare the Creating Word. The Written Word testifies of the Redeeming Word, and declares the Oneness of the Word creating and the Word redeeming. Jesus Christ, the Creator and Redeemer, is the Source of all power, supplying and directing the forces that move the worlds in unbroken harmony, and drawing all things unto Himself. He sends forth the sweet influence of the Pleides and holds the bands of Orion. He wants to be first in our thoughts, the Center of our emotions and impulses, the Perfecter of our faith and love. While we study His works He would have us see eternal power and goodness above them and within them, and talk of the Hand that holds them and directs them. While we are passing through this world, burdened with its duties and cares, and bowed down with its sorrows and bereavements, He asks us to look to Him and to make His joy our strength. “Let us therefore lay aside every weight and the easily besetting sin, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, *looking unto Jesus.*”

"What is it," asks Henry van Dyke, "that we see in Christ? Holiness, and justice, and truth, and mercy, and kindness, and pity, and wisdom, and love. Through that door our thoughts go out to seek after God, not blindly, but with a Divine guidance. All that is holy, all that is true, all that is good, all that is spiritually lovely belongs to God. It is but the broken image and reflection of the perfect light of His countenance revealed in Jesus Christ. Every gleam of glory that flashes upon our souls as we wander freely through the world of thought, like every ray of radiance that we see upon the breast of the morning waters beneath the stars, is an evidence and interpretation of the eternal light, which is God."

Jesus, the Son of man, is "Humanity clothed in the Brightness of God." The soul of Jesus was filled with eternal beauty and purity, having no spot nor stain, disturbed by no obliquity of view or feeling, lapsing therefore into no eccentricity or deformity. He was the only man whom the world has ever seen who was as good as the Law—the only man who "brought the bottom of His life up to the top of His light"—the only man among men who is a perfect Guide and Exemplar. There can be no advance, except through Him, in true religious knowledge. All the scriptures of the New Testament, as well as those of the Old, testify of Him. He tells us that He comes from the spiritual world and that He returns to it. He has seen it and comprehends it. He testifies of that which He has seen

and speaks of that which He knows. "His word is our chart, His spirit is our Guide, His person is our Star. Our motto is, 'Not a new gospel, but more gospel.' Advance in theology through Chirst, means the outgoing of the soul into life with God, with new experiences, new wonders, new glories unfolding every day. Beloved, now we know in part. But we know. And the door that opens before us into a wider, richer, truer knowledge of God, is Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person." "He does not give us a definition God. Definitions are limitations. He gives us a vision of God. Vision is liberation. 'Look out through Me,' He says to us, 'and you shall see the Father. For the Father is in Me and I in Him. He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.'"

In Jesus is presented to our view the Representative Man, in whom the idea of the species is incarnated, in whose person is included "all that belongs to the perfection of every man." The more intently we study the portrait of Jesus drawn by the evangelists the more clearly shall we discern in Him, "not one man among many, imbedded in and bearing the impress of a limited environment, but the lone figure of the One Universal Man, spacious, catholic, eternal, our norm and archetype." He is majestic and strong yet gracious and tender; "neither merciful to the exclusion of justice, nor severe without compassion; mild and gentle, He is yet equally courageous and noble. The features of no one

type of goodness monopolize His character. He seems to include and to bring to perfection in Himself every conceivable type of goodness, and to belong to all time, and to be at home in every age and place. The local, the temporary, the accidental fade out of sight as we look on Him, and there shine out the lineaments of the Universal and Eternal."

The portrait of Jesus, as delineated in the holy gospels, portended His power over life and death. His life among men accorded with His words: "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it up again." When, therefore, His wondrous life ended in apparent defeat and His lifeless body was laid in the tomb, the seeming triumph of His enemies was but momentary, for it was not possible for Him to be held by death. God, His Father, who loved Him because He laid down His life, raised Him up and exalted Him at His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior. "So the world-shaking thought took hold of human minds, that as behind the life of Christ they had felt the movement of the life of God, so now behind His death was the suffering and the redeeming love of God. And this thought once taking root in men's minds, lo! the news of Christ's death sped forth, a message to Jew and Gentile—a message burning to make itself known wherever sinful men were found. For there is no wider need among mankind than the need of pardoning love. Whatsoever speaks of such a love in God, speaks in the one tongue that the universal human heart can comprehend."

Looking unto Jesus, literally rendered, reads "looking away from unto the Jesus." Turning away from every thing that the world has to offer us, and looking unto Jesus is the one thing to do in the race set before us in the gospel. We are exhorted to look, not to some unknown person, who demands our service and love, but to the Jesus whom we know, who was born in Bethlehem, who on the Cross gave up His life for us, who arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, being exalted to the right hand of God; who is present with His people on the earth and is declared with power to be the Son of God. To this Jesus "whom God hath made both Lord and Christ," we are directed to look in life's earnest, trying race at the terminus of which He stands ready to crown with everlasting joy every one who "endures to the end."

In the old Greek race all ran, but only one obtained the crown of laurel. All the contestants, with the uncertain hope of winning the prize, submitted to a rigid course of discipline and were temperate in all things. They did this, moved by the glimmering hope of becoming victors and obtaining a corruptible crown. In the Christian race every one who keeps his body in subjection and his heart pure, looking unto Jesus, runs not uncertainly, and will at the end of his course receive a prize and obtain an incorruptible crown.

The name Jesus holds in it the thought of salvation. The angel, who stands in the presence of God, and who announced His coming,

so named Him before His wondrous birth, because He saves His people from their sins.

Jesus saves. His arm, unaided, brought salvation. To save is the prerogative of Jesus. The condition required of us is looking away from every thing else and from ourselves to Jesus alone. Look to Jesus and be saved. Look and live. As those in the camp of Israel who had been bitten by the fiery serpents, were healed by looking at the brazen serpent lifted up by Moses, so looking to Christ crucified brings pardon and healing to the soul poisoned by sin. How simple the condition! God does not require of us some great thing. He does not command us to inflict punishment upon ourselves. He suffered for us. He requires no price nor gift. He gave Himself for us and paid the debt. Only look. There is no act easier and more simple than turning around and looking. "Turn ye, turn ye, saith the Lord. Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else."

Turning away from sin, and looking to Jesus brings salvation, with peace that passeth knowledge and joy unutterable. This is the beginning. The "eyes of our hearts," once turned toward Jesus and lightened with the light of His life, must never be turned away from Him. "Looking unto Jesus" means obedience to His commandments and work in His vineyard. Though we are saved by grace through faith, and the work of saving is Christ's work, He keeps us saved on the condition that "we work

out our salvation while He works in us to will and to do." When we have done all that the law requires of us, we can only say, "We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do." There is no saving merit in our works. We shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and rewarded according to our works, but the glory of our salvation belongs to Him who "saves by His life."

To them who are thus saved Jesus is inexpressibly precious. He is their life, in His light they walk, and in His love they abide. In Him they find blessedness; for in Him there is no shadow of mortality, no darkness whatever, and no trace of unloveliness. He is without blemish and without fault. He embodies all the excellencies of humanity, and in Him and through Him shines the beauty of Deity. In His presence God's Holy Ones, with veiled faces and bowed heads, cry one to another. "Holy, Holy, Holy!" The presence of Jesus is the glory and joy of heaven, and His saving power in the believing heart brings peace and joy, and glorifies the earth.

"Lord of earth and heaven! my breast
Seeks in Thee its only rest:
I was lost! Thy accents mild
Homeward lured Thy wandering child.
I was blind! Thy healing ray
Charmed the long eclipse away.
Source of every joy I know,
Solace of my every woe,
O, if once Thy smile divine,
Ceased upon my soul to shine,
What were heaven or earth to me?
Whom have I in each but Thee?"

It is related that Tennyson and a friend were one day walking together in a garden. The friend asked the poet what he thought of Jesus Christ. Tennyson made no reply till they came to a rosebush. Then pointing to a rose he said: "What the sun is to that rose Jesus Christ is to me."

While standing on the bank of the sacred Jordan, John, "a man sent from God," saw Jesus, after His baptism and temptation coming to him, and said to his disciples, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Of all the names applied to Jesus this is the most pathetic. The lamb, bright and playful, the most gentle and most innocent of the mute animals, stood in the ritual of Israel as the symbol of the sinless, priceless, timeless Sacrifice offered in infinite love for the sins of the whole world. Jesus offered on the Cross a perfect Sacrifice for sin, so that little children are morally free from the sins of their parents and are heirs of the kingdom. Every individual, however, after attaining the age of personal responsibility to God, bears his own sins until he repents, ceases to do evil, and learns to do well, looking to Jesus who bears away his sins and begets in him a new life. No man is held responsible for the sins of his ancestors, and no man need bear the burden of his own sins. Jesus stands ever ready to relieve him, and to "remove his transgressions as far from him as the east is from the west."

We are not redeemed with corruptible things

as silver and gold, but "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Those who are crowned victors in the Christian race overcame through the blood of the Lamb, and they who stand without fault before the throne of God, washed, while on earth, their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"Any new set of conditions," says E. Ray Lankaster, "occurring to an animal which renders its food and safety very easily attainable seems to lead as a rule to degeneration." This law of reversion to type, under conditions that favor ease and indolence in the lower world of animal life, is in full force in the higher world of intellectual and spiritual life. So clearly did one of the old prophets of Israel see the out-working and results of this law in his day that in his earnest warning to his people he cried out, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Not heeding this warning they degenerated in physical strength and mental and moral force, and finally were carried away into captivity and exile. Conditions of ease and luxury as a rule foster idleness and ungodliness, and sooner or later lead men and women into bondage to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life."

On account of this perverted, downward tendency in human nature, life's pathway is not all made smooth and bright. There are rugged steps to climb, enemies to be met and vanquished, pain and sorrow to be endured, clouds and

darkness through which we must pass. Looking above these to Jesus will give us strength and courage, joy and victory. He looked forward to the joy that was set before Him, and in anticipation of entering into His glory, endured the Cross, not regarding its deep shame. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. And all chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them who have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness." Labor and toil develop strength; sorrow and bereavement, under the light of the Sun of righteousness, produce in the soul patience, sweetness, ripeness.

"The heavier the cross, the heartier the prayer;
The bruised herbs most fragrant are;
If wind and sky were always fair,
The sailor would not watch the star;
And David's songs had ne'er been sung,
If grief his heart had never wrung."

Darkness reveals the stars. Suffering and bereavement lead us up to clearer views of God our Father. When we walk under the forest aisles in summer the soft foliage hides from us God's sweet skies. But when the desolating winds of winter have made the branches bare, we can look up through these same boughs and see the twinkling stars. He who, looking to Jesus, works and loves, endures the wrongs and hardships of life, and bears with resignation its privations and bereavements, will always be able to look up and say:

"My bark is wafted on the strand
By breath Divine;
And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine.

One who was known in storms to sail
I have on board;
Above the roaring of the gale
I have my Lord.

He holds me when the billows smite;
I shall not fall.
If sharp, 'tis short; if long, 'tis light—
He tempers all.

Safe to the land! Safe to the land!
The end is this;
And then with Him go hand in hand
Far into bliss."

Jesus is all and in all to every one who believes and works. There is no condition nor relation of our being that He does not control, and no need that He fails to supply. He is our Light; we rejoice in the light of His life. "He is our way; we walk in Him. He is our Truth; we embrace Him. He is our Life; we live in Him. He is our Lord; we choose Him to rule over us. He is our Master; we serve Him. He is our Teacher, instructing us in the way of salvation. He is our Prophet, giving us the knowledge of the Most High, and pointing out the future. He is our Advocate, ever living to make intercession for us. He is our Savior, saving to the uttermost. He is our Root; we grow from Him. He is our true Vine; we abide in Him. He is the Water of Life; we come to Him and drink. He is the fairest among ten thousand;

we love Him above all others. He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person; we strive to reflect His likeness. He is the Upholder of all things; we rest on Him. He is our wisdom; we are guided by Him. He is our Righteousness; we look to Him to enable us to walk in the right way. He is our Sanctification; we draw all our power for living a holy life from Him. He is our Redemption; redeeming us from all iniquity. He is our Healer; curing all our diseases. He is our Friend; relieving all our trouble. He is our Elder Brother; cheering us in our difficulties."

Jesus, the Light of men, if we look to Him, will lighten us safe through the darkness of this world into the light of that which is to come, and then be our Light forever.

"Lead kindly Light, amid the circling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me."

To the seekers of truth, and of salvation through the truth the apostles preached *Jesus*. They preached not merely the gospel of a purifying, elevating ethics but the gospel of a Person without sin, without fault, able to save from sin, perfect in all the endowments of personality. The power that is to transform the individual and uplift humanity is not abstract but concrete. "It is not subscription to a creed, nor obedience to a law, nor indorsement of a system

of morals. It is devotion to a Person. 'For I know whom I have believed' is the first Apostle's Creed. And herein lies the secret of victory: A Person, real, living, substantial, potential; the exponent of truth, the substance of law, the personification of love; a 'who' instead of a 'what;' a man instead of a method; a Being who is Himself all that we ought to be, and all that we long to be." This is the need of men, the gospel for a world of doubt and sin, and this need is met in Jesus Christ, the Great Teacher, the Supreme Example, the All-sufficient Savior.

It is an inversion of the facts recorded in the Gospels and the Epistles to speak of Jesus as if He were chiefly a religious teacher. "What we have to deal with in Him is," says S. A. Johnston Ross, "not first or chiefly His teaching, but, first and chiefly, His Person: a Person transcending the limits of earthly life, and of time and space, and of race and language; a Person attesting Himself alive and in power by the work He does in creating persons made new and made strong in love. Concede the present day life of the Person and His consciousness of man as coextensive with man's life, and the peculiar vitality of His teachings while on earth becomes intelligible; its singular freedom from all that would be hampering local and provincial in its setting takes on new meaning, and we begin to understand why the gospel has so wonderfully acclimatized itself in all lands, and why Christendom is already the one truly cosmopolitan State.

“‘Heaven and earth shall pass away,’ said Jesus with amazing confidence, ‘but My words shall not pass away.’ And again, ‘All authority is given unto Me in heaven and earth: go ye therefore and teach all nations; and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.’

“As the centuries pass it becomes increasingly evident that the sublime confidence of Jesus was justified. His words endure because He endures. His words spread themselves over the earth and make disciples among all nations, because He lives, the Oversoul of the universal human spirit, the answer to all its questionings, the Representative and Reservoir of all its desires and hopes—the one Word that the wistful heart of universal man longs to utter to its God, and the Eternal Word of God to man.” When Lord Kelvin was requested to name his greatest discovery he replied: “My greatest discovery is the fact that Jesus Christ is the Savior of sinners, of whom I am chief.”

Jesus. The very name is crowned with an aureole of life and light and love. In a life of energy, and service, and purity His name becomes more and more luminous and beautiful as the years move on. Above the toils, and the sorrows, and the sufferings of this present time the pure heart beholds *Jesus*, and when all that is visible and mortal is yielding to the subtlety of death *Jesus* still appears within the vision of faith and love. “When Stephen was stoned.

those who stoned him saw only a man sinking down to death, but Stephen looked up and exclaimed, '*I see Jesus.*' So must we try to impress upon the minds and hearts of the coming generation that they must see more than business, wealth, opportunity, power and conquest, that they must see the spiritual reality behind the visible, natural form. When we get to this point we will have *Christ* in this life and the life to come."

The short life of Jesus upon earth will evermore live in the memory and in the hearts of those whom He makes kings and priests unto God. While they move through the world in the service of the Master they sing as they go.

"And Him evermore I behold
Walking in Galilee,
Through the cornfield's waving gold,
In hamlet, in wood, and in wold,
By the shores of the Beautiful Sea.
He toucheth the sightless eyes;
Before Him the demons flee;
To the dead He sayeth, 'Arise!'
To the living, 'Follow Me!'
And the voice still soundeth on,
From the centuries that are gone,
To the centuries that shall be."

Let us evermore look unto *Jesus*. Behold Him making His advent into our world in the form of helpless infancy, and subjecting Himself to the trials, temptations, and hardship common to the life of men. See Him going about doing good, declaring the Father, and finally laying down His life upon the Cross that

we might obtain pardon for our offences, and taking it up again that we might have life eternal. Behold Him as he ascends far above all heavens and, in the presence of millions of angels and saints, seats Himself as our Advocate at the right hand of the King Eternal.

Let us look to Jesus and seek to know Him through the Scriptures, through the power of the Holy Spirit, and in genuine religious experience.

THE WITNESSING SPIRIT

And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth.

—1 John 5:7.

Culture is good, genius is brilliant, civilization a blessing, education is a great privilege; but we may be educated villains. The thing that we want most of all is the precious gift of the Holy Spirit.

—John Hall.

A religion without the Holy Spirit, though it had all the ordinances and all the doctrines of the New Testament, would certainly not be Christianity.

—William Arthur.

The work of the Spirit is to impart life, to implant hope, to give liberty, to testify of Christ, to guide us into all truth, to teach us all things, and to convict the world of sin.

—D. L. Moody.

XVII

THE WITNESSING SPIRIT

The Holy Scriptures affirm the Being of God and proceed upon the implied fact that "eternity is the lifetime of God." "In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth." "In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the Beginning with God. All things were made by Him." In the Beginning "the Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters" of infinity, out of which He generated the universe. In these utterances the work of creation is ascribed to God, to the Word, and to the Spirit. These names of Deity, in the manifestation of God in human form and flesh, became Father, Son and Holy Spirit, thereby revealing the loving, beautiful character of God, and His ineffable Personality.

These facts make it reasonable for us to adopt Daniel Webster's article of faith on the Nature of God: "I believe that God exists in Three Persons; this I learn from Revelation. Nor is it any objection to this belief that I cannot comprehend how one can be three or three one. I hold it my duty to believe, not what I can comprehend or account for, but what my Maker teaches Me."

This threefold Personality is not a mathematical, but a psychological Trinity. This view places the doctrine of the Triune God within the realm of the reasonable; but we can not explore nor comprehend the mode of God's existence. We do not understand our own consciousness and personality. To solve the nature of God all human thought must forever come short. "Tell me," said John Wesley, "how it is that in this room there are three flames and but one light, and I will explain to you the Divine existence." "We know God easily," says Joubert, "provided we do not constrain ourselves to define Him." "When we attempt to define and describe God both language and thought desert us," says Emerson.

God reveals to us through Life and Light and Love His power and wisdom and goodness, as they are discerned in His Works, in His Written Word, and in His only begotten Son. Within this vast domain of Divine revelation we may study, and learn, and love, but beyond it we attempt in vain to pass.

Everywhere in the Bible the Holy Spirit is spoken of as a person; never as a mere influence separable from personality. He "teaches," "reproves," "guides," "comforts," "anoints" and "sanctifies" men. "He searches all things yea the deep things of God." "The Spirit himself maketh intercession." After the baptism of Jesus, while He was praying, "the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form,

as a dove, upon Him, and a voice came out of Heaven: Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased." Through this witness of the Spirit, John was enabled to bear witness to his disciples that "Jesus is the Christ."

During His ministry on earth Jesus declared God and bore witness to the truth. Since His ascension, "It is the Spirit," whose presence is not limited by space and time, "that beareth witness, because," like Jesus, "the Spirit is the truth."

Though the age of Christianity is the spiritual period in the world's history, the work of the Holy Spirit has never been limited to one age, nor to one people. Abel, in offering up sacrifice to God, "obtained witness that he was righteous." Enoch, before his translation, "had witness borne to him that he had been well pleasing unto God." Socrates claimed to "live under a certain Divine and spiritual influence." All the patriarchs and prophets "had witness borne to them through their faith." During the ministration of the law, God taught the people by statutes and ordinances,—object lessons suited to their conditions and needs. Also to the devout in Israel he gave "His good Spirit to instruct them," and the holy men of old who wrote the Hebrew Scriptures, "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." The lightening Spirit of Christ has always been in the world, "rejoicing in the habitable earth and taking delight with the sons of men," inspiring them with wisdom and love.

Concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit the teaching of Jesus is so remarkable that it excites us to ask, "Where was the Holy Spirit during the life of the only begotten Son of God?" His personal influence was felt in the ancient church, as we have just seen, and yet Jesus speaks of the Spirit's coming as a new and special gift, "I will pray the Father," He says, "and He will give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever." It has been suggested that the fullness of the Spirit was not realized prior to His coming on the day of Pentecost. This is doubtless true, but, "the answer would rather seem to be," says Joseph Parker, "that the Holy Spirit was in Jesus Christ Himself and could not be given to the church as a distinctively Christian gift until the first period of the incarnation had been consummated in the Ascension of the Son of man. 'If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.' Jesus Christ was Himself the New Testament. Whatever happened aforetime was but preparatory and typical. From His coming the world was to date its regeneration and the church was to reckon its birth. 'In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;' and when that fullness of the Godhead was poured out upon the Church it came as from the very heart of Christ, and contained all the elements which make up the mystery and the beneficence of the Incarnation.

"Jesus gives a specific definition of the work

of the Holy Spirit. That His work admitted of definition is itself a significant circumstance; and that the Son of Mary should have presumed to define it is a marvelous instance of His Spiritual dominion. At this point Jesus Christ seems to pass from the theatre within which He dazzled the eyes of curiosity by the number and splendor of His miracles, and to enter into the Holy of Holies, the Secret place of the Most High, and seat Himself as the donor of spiritual riches. It is a withdrawment—even if considered merely as a conception—that invests Him with peculiar awe. He says He will do mightier works than ever; He will touch the life, the will, the love of the world; He will ascend above principalities and powers, and subject all hosts and forces to spiritual control, invisible and almighty.

“Let us now see with what simplicity and decisiveness Jesus Christ defines and limits the functions of the Holy Spirit:

1. He shall not speak of Himself.
2. He shall glorify Me.
3. He will guide you into all truth.
4. He will show you things to come.

Besides the work of comfort within the church He has a great work of conviction to do in the world.

“‘He shall not speak of Himself.’ Why not? Because He would be speaking in an unknown tongue. We cannot understand the purely spiritual. Whatever we know of it must come through mediums which lie nearest our own na-

ture. The ministry of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is limited only because we ourselves are limited. The whole ministry of God is an accommodation to human weakness. When He would teach truth He must needs set it in the form of fact; when He would show Himself, it must be through the tabernacle of our own flesh; when He would reveal heaven He must illustrate His meaning by the fragments of light and beauty which are scattered on the Higher side of our inferior world. Everywhere, could we but see it, He has set up a ladder by which we may reach the skies. God would have talked with us without any intervention, but we could not have known the meaning of utterances which were not bounded and illustrated by things lower than ourselves; therefore hath He set His tabernacle in the sun and made manifest His invisible Kingdom and power by the wonderful works of His hands. We must begin with His hand, or we cannot know His heart. The doubting disciple said of Jesus that only the print of the nails and the wound of the spear could convince him of the identity of the Lord. And at best are we not all, by the pitifulness of the great mercy of God, allowed to begin with the Divine hand, instead of going at once into the sanctuary of the Divine heart? The Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself, because there must be a common ground upon which He can invite the attention of mankind. Where and what is the common ground?

“‘He shall glorify Me.’ The common ground

is the work of the man Christ Jesus. What is meant by glorifying Jesus? We know what is meant by the sun glorifying the earth. The sun does not create the landscape. The mountains and the sea are just as high and as wide in the grey, cold dawn as at noonday. The sun adds nothing to the acreage of the meadows or the stature of the rocks, yet how wonderful is the work of the sun. Look upon the earth in the pale dawn and watch the ministry of the sun from hour to hour. How the light strikes the hills, burnishes the sea, flashes in the trembling dew-drop, and makes the blossoming bush burn as if with the presence of God. Every thing was there before; yet how transfigured by the ministry of light. In this respect, what light is to the earth, the Holy Spirit is to Jesus Christ. The Sun in doing all his wonderful work, does not speak of Himself; he will not, indeed, allow us to look at him. If we turn our eyes upon him the rebuke is prompt and intolerable. The language of that rebuke is,—look at the earth, not at me; see the opportunity for service and culture which is given you; do not intrude upon my tabernacle, but work within your own sphere while it is called day.

“The Holy Spirit, in like manner, does not speak of Himself. He will not answer all our inquiries respecting His personality. We cannot venture with impunity beyond a well defined line. To the very last, men will inquire, ‘What is the Holy Spirit?’ showing that all attempts at exhaustive definition have ended in failure

and disappointment. Yet, whilst He Himself is the eternal secret, His work is open and glorious. His text is Christ. From that He never strays. To the individual consciousness He reveals the mystery of the beauty of Christ. The Christian student sees a Christ whom he did not see twenty years ago,—the same, yet not the same; larger, grander, tenderer, everyday; a new music in His speech, an ampler sufficiency in His grace; a deeper humiliation in His cradle; a keener agony in His Cross. This increasing revelation is the work of the Holy Spirit, and is the fulfillment of Jesus Christ's own promise. That the Son of Mary should have claimed the Holy Spirit as His interpreter! Observe this as an incidental contribution towards the completeness and harmony of the mystery that is embodied in Christ Jesus. Regarded in this light it is very wonderful. The beginning and the end are the same—equal in mystery, in condescension, in solemn grandeur. Thus: 'That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit'—this is the beginning; 'He shall not speak of Himself, He shall glorify Me,'—this is the end: are the notes discordant? The incarnation of the Son of God was the work of the Holy Spirit; how natural that the explanation of the Son of God should be the work of the same Minister. As He was before the visible Christ, so He was to be after Him, and thus the whole mystery never passed from His own control.

"The life of the Son of man, as written in the gospels, needs to be glorified. He was de-

spised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He had not where to lay His head. He gave His back to the smiters, and His checks to them that plucked off the hair. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor. Upon all this chasm, so deep, so grim, we need a light above the brightness of the sun. When the light comes, the root out of a dry ground will be as the flower of Jesus, and the face marred more than any man's will be fairest among ten thousand and altogether lovely."

As the Holy Spirit glorifies the Living Word, so He also glorifies the Written Word. "As the prophecy did not come by the will of man, it cannot be fully comprehended and explained by the intellectual power of man. In receiving and pronouncing the word, man was an instrument, and he must be an instrument also in the study and mastery of its meaning. As holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit to speak, so men must be moved by the Holy Spirit to feel and understand the Divine Oracle." The words of the Bible must be studied, not only by the intellectual power of man, but also through the eyes of the heart, lightened by the Holy Spirit, to be understood in their spiritual meaning and fullness. The things of the spiritual Kingdom of God are hidden from the wise and prudent of this world, because their eyes are blinded by the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life; but they are revealed, by

the Holy Spirit, unto babes in simplicity and humility.

We come now to an exceedingly interesting part of the work of the Holy Spirit—that of personal companionship, bringing with it Divine instruction, blessed influence, and the most gracious and nourishing comfort. “He abideth with you, and shall be in you.” In the abiding and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, He awakens in the consciousness a sense of His presence and goodness, and gives assurance of the filial relation of the spiritually born children to the Heavenly Father. “The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”

We are born into the world under the law of sin and death, and live in the conscious experience of its seductive and depraving influence. When, in the birth from above, we are born into the Kingdom of God, and come under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, we are taken into filial relation to God our Father. This adoption into the spiritual family of God gives us the feeling of filial trust and confidence, and with this experience comes the consciousness of the new life begotten and nourished in the soul by the Holy Spirit.

This consciousness of filial standing, and privilege, and duty in the spiritual family of God, like other matters of personal experience, cannot be made intelligible to those into whose experience it has never come. To be apprehended by the individual it must come within the field

of his own consciousness. Then he will know the witness of the Spirit just as he knows other impressions and operations. What can any one know of the feeling of awe who has never been moved by the sublime; or of the delight awakened by loveliness if he has no perception of the beautiful; or of the impulse of affection, if he has never felt the power of love? As these impressions, to become objects of knowledge, must appear in the consciousness of the individual, so must the witness of the Spirit—the Divine assurance confirming the feeling of filial relationship to God—become a fact of experience in the conscious soul before it can become a matter of personal knowledge. This experience of the inner life comes as an influence, or impression, from a Divine Person, felt but never seen.

“The Holy Spirit’s action, like His nature, is mysterious, so sudden, so real, so deeply felt, yet neither to be measured, nor expressed in words more delicate than thought, tenderer than love, yet mightier than lightning, present everywhere, yet nowhere visible; an eternal certainty, yet also an eternal surprise. All this is happily consistent, and is precisely what might have (though with infinite imperfections) been predicted of the conditions. A happy sense of satisfaction comes with it all. Our sense of the necessary mystery of spiritual life is met, whilst the pure hungerings and thirstings of the soul are appeased. We feel as we lay hold of the realities of the doctrine that the revelation of the Person

and minstry of the Holy Spirit is given in the best manner, with awfulness yet with familiarity—that the Holy Spirit Himself combines the solemn magnificence and independent solitude of the sun with the gracious universality and animating friendliness of Light.”

The sun beautifies the earth; the Holy Spirit beautifies and glorifies Jesus, illumines the Holy Scriptures, fills the soul with the light of life; and while “we walk in the Spirit” we live in the full beauty of the goodness and love of God.

“HIS ETERNAL GLORY”

The God of all grace, who called you unto His Eternal Glory, in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall Himself perfect, establish, strengthen you.

—1 Peter 5:10.

True glory is a flame lighted at the skies.

—Horace Mann.

The wisdom of the Lord is infinite, as are also His glory and His power. Ye heavens, sing His praises; sun, moon, and planets, glorify Him in your ineffable language! Praise Him, celestial harmonies, and all ye who can comprehend them! And thou, my soul, praise thy Creator! It is by Him and through Him that all exist.

—Kepler.

Lord of all being! throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Center and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!

Sun of our life, Thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, Thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

Our midnight is Thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is Thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch Thy mercy's sign;
All, save the clouds of sin, are Thine.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

XVIII

“HIS ETERNAL GLORY”

Life is something more than the sum of its physical elements. Men may take the component parts of living matter and chemically combine them, but they cannot produce life in the resultant combination. Light is something more than the sum of all the colors of the spectrum. By synthesis of all the colors men may make whiteness; they cannot make light. Love is something more than the aggregate of all the virtues. By synthesis of all the virtues we only make virtue; we do not make love. Life, Light, and Love are not modes, nor qualities, nor attributes. They cannot be defined nor described. They defy the analysis of thought. They elude the grasp of the intellect. Only phenomena come within the realm of the mind. They are ultimate elements or substances, cognizable only by the Infinite Mind. They are part of the “secret, (unknowable), things that belong unto the Lord our God.”

When in our researches we have traced all the manifestations of living beings to Life, all the phenomena of illumination, physical, mental, and spiritual to Light; and all the virtues, as qualities to Love, we have approached the Most Holy Place of the universe, we have come “under the shadow of the Almighty,” into the outshining rays of “His Eternal Glory,” in which

God dwelt before time was, in which He will dwell when time is no more.

In the highpriestly prayer to the Father, just after His work was finished, while the agony of Gethsemane and the sufferings of the Cross were immediately before Him, our Lord prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." The glory that Jesus here prayed for was not a created glory. It was the glory that He enjoyed with the Father before the work of creation was begun. It was the inherent, eternal glory of Deity for which He prayed. "Glorify Me with Thine Own Self." It was a glory throbbing with life, glowing with light, redolent with love; the glory that the Creator has set above the heavens, that no man can see and live, in which angels cover their faces. God has thrown shadows of that glory upon the things that are made. We see a reflection of it in the glory of the stars, in the face of the sun, on the flowing and gilded clouds, in the sevenfold splendor of the rainbow. It glows in the coruscations of the aurora borealis, in the sheen of the ocean, in the flash of electricity, and in the chastened beauty of the blossoming bush.

"The heavens declare the glory of God,
And the firmament showeth His handiwork;
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night showeth knowledge."

But, more beautifully than in the inanimate world does the glory of the Creator shine out

in the living world, especially in man, earth's masterpiece of the Creating Hand. God made man in His own image, breathed into him the breath of life, and endowed him with "high reason and will," inspired him with spiritual life, placed in him a divine light, and dowered him with eternal love: thus throwing around him a shadow of the Eternal Glory. "For Thou hast made him a little lower than God and hast crowned him with glory and honor."

Though the shadow of sin has passed over the glory of man, leaving it in the condition of perpetual eclipse, the shaded image of God remaining in him awakens a longing for a sight of the Divine Glory. This desire has moved the hearts of the great and good of all the ages. For a divine manifestation Plato sighed. When Tennyson was asked what was the greatest desire of his life, he replied, "My greatest wish is to have a clearer vision of God." Moses prays, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory," and Isaiah exclaims, "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." "What," asks F. W. Robertson, "is the burden of Jacob's all-night wrestle with the angel? Is it to get safe through tomorrow? No, no, no! To be blessed by God, to know Him and what He is—that is the battle of Jacob's soul from sunset till the dawn of day. And this is our struggle—the struggle. Out of our frail yet sublime humanity the demand that arises in the earlier hours of our religion may be this: 'Save my soul;' but in the most unearthly moments it is

this: 'Tell me Thy name.' We move through a world of mystery, and the deepest question is, What is the Being that is ever near, sometimes felt, never seen; that which has haunted us from childhood with a dream of something surpassingly fair, which has never yet been realized; that which sweeps through the soul at times as a desolation, like the blast from the wings of the angel of death, leaving us stricken and silent in our loneliness; that which has touched us in our tenderest part, and the flesh has quivered with agony and our mortal affections shriveled up with pain; that which comes to us in aspirations of nobleness? Shall we say It or He? What is It? Who is He? Those anticipations of immortality and God, what are they? Shall I call them God, Father, Spirit, Love? A living Being within me or outside me? Tell me Thy name, Thou awful mystery of loveliness. This is the struggle of all earnest life."

In the Old Testament times we see men groping in the dawn; in the New Testament we behold them moving in the sunlight. In the gospels and the epistles shines the long-expected Light that was to come into the world. To all who receive It "the darkness is passing away and the true light is now shining." God is speaking to men by His Son, the Lord of life and glory.

In the prayer from which we have already quoted, Jesus said to the Father, "I have glorified Thee on earth." Jesus Christ manifested the glory of God in the words which were giv-

en Him to speak and in the works which were given Him to do by the Father. In no word that He ever spoke, in no work that He ever performed did He show the least shadow of ignorance or weakness. The work that He finished showed that in Him dwelt infinite power and wisdom. In His pure, spotless life there was no darkness. In Him dwelt Divine fullness and glory, and to Him was given the Spirit without measure. In Him were life, and light, and love—life so abundant that He had power to lay down His own life and to take it up again; light so resplendent that in it shone all truth; love so intense and so comprehensive that it embraced the whole human family and moved Him to give His Life for the life of the world. He is the fairest in Heaven or earth and is altogether lovely. He changes not and His years fail not. He is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He is the embodiment of all that is true, and beautiful, and good in humanity: He is the perfect man. In Him dwells all the fullness of Divine Being; He is God manifested in the flesh. In Him we see the human life of God.

Thus, in the gift of His only begotten Son, who is the Brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person, God has granted “the desire of all nations,” and has made a revelation of Himself far surpassing in glory the highest hopes of men. “We beheld His glory,” says the beloved disciple, “glory as of the only

begotten of the Father." Time has not obscured that glory. It grows brighter as the ages roll by, and if men fail to see the glorious manifestation of Deity in the man Christ Jesus, the fault is not in the mode of the manifestation, but because "the darkness is in man." He who beholds "the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," and awakes with His likeness will be satisfied.

"Earth seems more sweet to live upon,
More full of love because of Him."

Recurring again to the highpriestly prayer of Jesus, we find that after praying for those whom the Father had given Him out of the world, He continues: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them. that they may be one even as We are One." In these words our Lord not only prays for those whom He drew around Him during His earthly life, but also for all who in the coming ages should believe on Him through their word. His prayer included them all, and to them all He bequeathed His own glory. "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." Marvelous gift! That the Eternal God would impart His glory to mortal man is a thought beyond all human thinking. But has not God re-

vealed that those who receive His only begotten Son come into filial relation to the Father? And if sons, then are they "partakers of the Divine Nature" and heirs of the Divine Glory.

And, since they are sons of God, they are all brothers, members of the household of faith, keeping the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." This last, all-embracing gift of the God of glory is that which constitutes the unity of the living church of the Living God. "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them that they may be one even as We are One." This glorious unity is effected, not by the baptism of water, nor by any other rite or ceremony, nor by church fellowship, but by the Holy Spirit. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," and become jointly heirs of His Eternal Glory. The living church—the kingdom of Christ Jesus—is thus seen to be "a spiritual congregation of souls born anew to God."

The glory of the Lord is the birthright of the children of God, to be realized in this life as well as in that which is to come. It is not something for which we may hope, which may be realized in the distant future. It is a glorious bequest that "has been given," a divine attraction that has been through all the ages drawing toward God and toward one another the children of light.

This imparted glory is, in the present life, an inner glory. In this world "the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation." It "is within you." It consists in righteousness, peace,

and joy in the Holy Spirit. The glory of God is a threefold glory—a glory of life, and light and love. These are also the elements of the inner glory which He has given to them who believe. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” “Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ will give thee light.” “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God.” Life, light, and love thus form in the inner man this divinely-given glory—the birthright, through grace, of every heir of the King of glory. When the heir is born into the Kingdom, the first outburst of joy finds expression in the word, “glory.” As He journeys through this world, whether in the sunshine of prosperity, or under the clouds of adversity, whether in the wilderness of discipline and trial or on the mount of beatitudes, the “joy unspeakable and full of glory” within re-echoes the words of the angels to the shepherds: “Glory to God in the highest.” When the shadows of life’s evening are lengthening and the last enemy is approaching, feeling that God is giving him victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, he passes out of the world with the triumphant shout upon his lips: “Glory to God in the height of His divinity; glory to God in the depth of His humanity; glory to God in His infinite perfections.” Thus “the heirs of the Kingdom,” while they “seek for glory, and honor, and immortality” in the eternal future, find them also in this life. The glorious presence of

Christ in the soul is heaven, even amid toil and sorrow, pain and bereavement.

“Heaven is where the Savior lives,
And where He reigns He heaven gives.
If in the Son we have a part,
We find a heaven in our heart;
And while we live all free from sin,
We’ve heaven to go to heaven in.”

Recurring once more to the highpriestly prayer of our Lord, we find another, and final request: “Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me.”

As the prayers of Jesus were always in accord with the Father’s will and were always heard, we may ever feel assured that in answer to this request of His beloved Son, those who die in the Lord, not only enter a state of blessedness, but abide in the presence of the Lord and behold His glory. On this side of the cloud that hides the unseen world the Glory of Christ is revealed only to the “enlightened eyes” of the believing heart, but when that cloud has been passed and the light of the celestial kingdom breaks upon the soul’s vision, those who have believed on the name of Jesus will see Him as He is, and behold His glory as it is manifested in the spiritual world.

The glory of God is set above the heavens, and its modified splendor beautifies all worlds, both of time and space. To them who believe and become co-heirs with Jesus of all things He

will grant, when they depart to be with Him where He is, the freedom of His Kingdom, including all worlds. Anywhere with those limitless realms the redeemed and saved will have the right, granted by the King Himself, to go and to study and enjoy truth, beauty, and goodness. A great and good bishop, in a sermon preached in his mature age, said, "When I reach the heavenly Jerusalem, I expect to mount the battlements and spend a thousand years roaming through the universe to see what God has made."

All who have become one with Christ and have passed beyond the intervening cloud are with Him today and "they shall grow in bliss till the ripening hour of the resurrection, when the Lord from heaven shall again appear, make the earthly into the heavenly," and take them in their resurrected, spiritual bodies into a greater and final manifestation of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. The gospel puts the crowning glories after the raised, glorified body clothes anew the spirit. That is the ultimate object—its goal and beginning of the fullness of glory. "Christ puts His death and resurrection," says Gilbert Haven, "within forty-eight hours of each other. He puts ours ages apart. What is it? The science that can connect the two ends of a laboratory table with an electric spark, can gird the world with its flame. Christ can raise Himself in one day and a portion of two. He can raise us if millions of years intervene. Thus and then He

will show forth His glory. He reserves the highest splendors for the crowning hour."

The glory of God will then be revealed in redeemed, perfected humanity. Each individual in his place will not only behold but also reflect the perfect beauty of God. "We know not what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." In the transforming power of His presence our resurrected bodies will become changed into the likeness of His glorified body. And so we shall be ever with the Lord, living in the radiance of "His Eternal Glory," while our vision of the Beauty of God grows clearer for ever and ever.

EPILOGUE

Jehovah is high above all nations
And His Glory above the heavens.
—Psalm 113:4.

Who is wise, and he shall understand these things?
Prudent, and he shall know them?
For the ways of the Lord are right,
And the just shall walk in them:
But transgressors shall fall therein.
—Hosea 14:9.

If you wish to behold God you may see Him in every object around; search in your breast and you will find Him there. And if you do not yet perceive where He dwells, confute me, if you can, and say where He is not.

—Metastasio.

What the world contains of good is from God's free and unrequited mercy; what it presents of real evil arises from ourselves.

—Bishop Blomfield.

To escape from evil we must be made as far as possible like God; and this resemblance consists in becoming holy, just, and good.

—Plato.

As long as we work on God's line, He will aid us. When we attempt to work on our own lines, He rebukes us with failure.

—Theodore L. Cuyler.

EPILOGUE

A Bishop said to a little girl, "I will give you an orange if you will tell me where God is." Like a flash of light came the answer, "I will give you two oranges if you will tell me where God is not." "Space is the stature of God," and "eternity is God's lifetime."

"If with the heart you seek Him
He's here, He's there, He's everywhere;
Go where you will you meet Him."

"God alone is true; God alone is great; alone is God." God is the All-Good, the All-Beautiful. "His steps are beauty and His presence light." "God is as great in minuteness as He is in magnitude." "God is absolutely good, and so assuredly the cause of all that is good." "God is the light, which, never seen itself, makes all things visible, and clothes itself with colors. Our eyes feel not its rays, but our hearts feel its warmth." "God hides nothing. His very work from the beginning is revelation—a casting aside of veil after veil, a showing unto men of truth after truth. On and on from fact divine He advances until at length in His only begotten Son Jesus He unveils His very face." "God is the highest wisdom. Through Him are wise all those that have wisdom. He is the true life, and through Him are living all those that have life. He is the supreme felicity, and from Him all have become happy who possess happiness. He

is the highest good, and from Him all beauty springs."

"All but God is changing day by day." "God is, therefore, the only sure foundation on which the mind can rest." "Naught but God can satisfy the soul." "His presence calms the soul and gives it quiet and repose." "We ought then to think of God oftener than we breathe." "He should be the object of all our desires, the end of all our actions, the principle of all our affections, the governing power of our whole souls." "Do you feel that you have lost your way in life? Then God Himself will show you your way. Are you utterly hopeless, worn out, body and soul? Then God's eternal love is ready and willing to help you up, and revive you. Are you wearied with doubts and fears? Then God's eternal light is ready to show you your way; God's eternal peace ready to give you peace. Do you feel yourself full of sins and faults? Then take heart; for God's unchangeable will is to take away those sins, and purge you from those faults."

God, in being and action, is Self-sustained and Self-moved; in presence is everywhere and is eternal, filling space and eternity; and in character is unchangeable and immaculate. He is the Architect, the Maker and Builder, the Upholder and Ruler of the universe; almighty in power, inexhaustible in knowledge and wisdom, and boundless in goodness. Life and Light and Love are elements of His Essence which is spiritual and eternal. His works are real and de-

clare His power, wisdom and goodness. God is not merely the impersonal energy of the universe. He is not a myth, born of human imaginings. The world is not an illusion. Things are what they seem—are what they are—made as they are by uncreated, Personal Power, in wisdom and love.

God, the Creator, is the Perfect Person; untrammelled, therefore, from within or from without, in working out the purposes of His will; living in undisturbed possession of infinite life, inexhaustible light, and boundless love; dwelling, therefore, in infinite glory and in eternal loveliness and blessedness. "How great is His goodness, and how great is His Beauty!"

The evils that abound in our world are the fruits of the transgression of God's law by men as free-agents. For this blot, made by the abuse of free-will, on a part of His works, God has made the best possible provision, and, in the time and order appointed in His wisdom, it will be washed out and the end of sin's reign will come. "Every plant," said Jesus, "which My Heavenly Father planted not shall be rooted up." Then the reign of truth, and goodness, and beauty will be inaugurated and there will be left no spot nor wrinkle in the perfected universe. This "far-off Divine event" God in Christ is working out, "according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."

"God is a worker; He has thickly strown
Infinity with grandeur. God is love:
He will wipe away creation's tears
And all the world shall summer in His smile."

In the meantime "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." He who accepts God's appointed Advocate obtains pardon and is granted Eternal Life.

He who has Eternal Life and walks in the Light, loveth. "He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." Herein he finds soul-rest—not passive, but active—rest in living the Life Eternal, rest in enjoying the Light of God's countenance, rest in "Loving and serving the purest and best." In this rest, the soul, without losing its own personality, becomes one with God, lives in God's life, moves in God's light, abides in God's love, and beholds God's perfect beauty.

God, as has been stated, is still working on the world. When His work is completed, the imperfect having passed away and the time for the perfect having come, all things will be made new, and in eternal newness and beauty God's works will evermore reflect His beauty and glory.

In the history of our world, as told in the Written Word, appear three great Divine events, the Creation, the Incarnation, and the Final Judgment, two of them passed and one yet to come, in each of which God's audible Voice is heard in the silences of the universe, and all the hosts of heaven rejoice and praise God, the Creator, Savior, and Judge of all the earth.

In the Beginning when God created the heav-

ens and the earth; when He laid the foundations thereof, stretched His line upon them and determined their dimensions; when, to crown His works, God said,

"Let Us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness,"

"Then the morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy."

Cycles of earth's history roll by, the Eternal Word becomes in the fullness of time in the little town of Bethlehem "The only begotten Son of God" and is named *Jesus*, because He saves His people from their sins; an angel announces His birth, while a multitude of the heavenly host appears with the angel praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace,, good will among men."

In the opening of His ministry this Jesus, whom God has made both Lord and Christ, having been baptized and praying, the Heaven is opened upon Him, and the Holy Spirit descends in a bodily form as a dove upon Him, and a voice comes out of Heaven into the silences of our world, declaring,

"Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased."

When "the far-off Divine event to which the whole creation moves" has passed from "the eternity of issues" into "the eternity of origins;" when the sea has given up the dead which

were in it, and death and hades have given up the dead which were in them; when death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor pain, the first things having passed away and all things made new and beautiful, then shall be heard round about the great White Throne of the universe a great voice, as the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, "Hallelujah; for the Lord, our God, the Almighty reigneth." "Salvation, and glory, and power belong to our God." "And He that sitteth upon the Throne, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, said

Behold I make all things new."

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